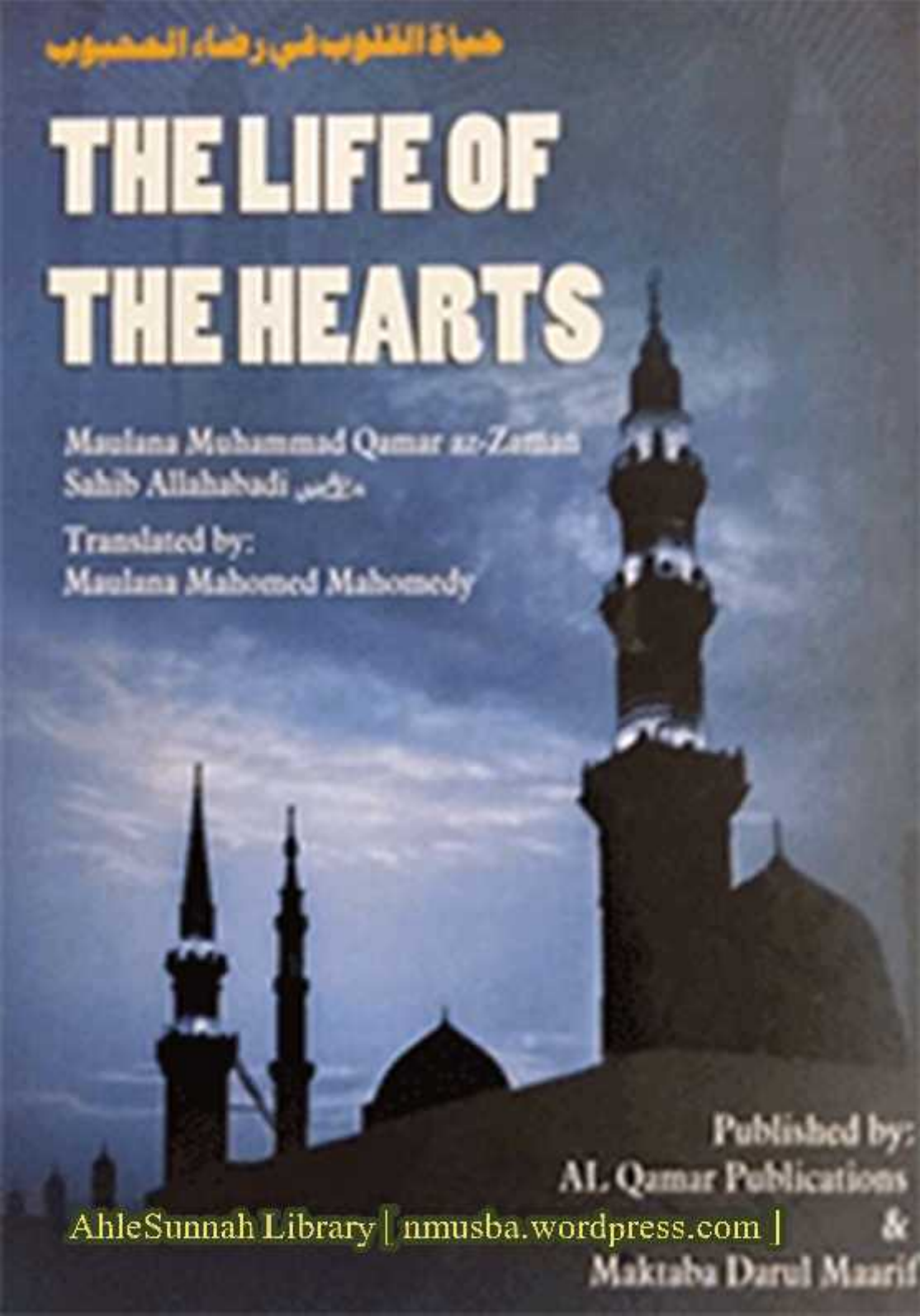
حياة القلوب في رضاء المحبوب

THE LIFE OF THE HEARTS

Maulana Muhammad Qamar az-Zaman
Sahib Allahabadi مدظله

Translated by:
Maulana Mahomed Mahomedy



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THE LIFE OF THE HEARTS

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī

Translated by

Maulānā Mahomed Mahomedy

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, Maktabah Dār al-Maʿārif Allāhābād, has had the honour of conveying several books on various themes and sciences to the masses and the elite. Scholars and spiritual masters blessed them with acceptance, and authors received them with approval. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

The book before you – *Ḥayāt al-Qulūb fī Riḍā' al-Maḥbūb* – is in reality a comprehensive and detailed explanation of the famous supplication of the Naqshbandīyyah masters:

> O my Allāh! You alone are my objective. I seek Your pleasure alone. Therefore confer me with Your love and recognition.

My honourable father tried to demonstrate the evil traits from which the hearts are to be purified, and the praiseworthy qualities with which they are to be embellished so that they can become sound hearts. After all, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "I desire to go before Allāh *taʿālā* with a sound heart." Every believer ought to have this desire that his heart must not be dead. Rather, it must be alive so that it is valued by Allāh *taʿālā*. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to practise. Āmīn.

Respected reader! There are a few other useful books which have already been compiled but need to be printed. We request your prayers so that Allāh *taʿālā* may provide the means from the unseen and make the task easy.

Finally, I consider it essential to inform you of a major tragedy. My honourable mother departed from this temporary world to the eternal world of the

Hereafter on 9 Rajab 1437 A.H./17 April 2016. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. I request your prayers for her forgiveness.

Also, I earnestly request you to remember my honourable father in your prayers – that Allāh *taʿālā* blesses him with good health and wellness, and to keep his shadow over us for a long time so that these academic works may continue and we are able to present various types of books to you.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ

Muḥammad ʿAbdullāh Qamar az-Zamān Qāsmī Allāhābādī
17 Rajab 1437 A.H.
25 April 2016

PRELUDE

الحمد لله الذي نور قلوب أوليائه بأنوار هدايته، صفاهم لتجلى صفة جلاله وجماله وكمال عظمته وأخلصهم للعكوف على بساط أنسه بالتقرب من حضرته وخلصهم وخصصهم لمناجاته ومحادثته ومكالمته ومخاطبته.

ونشهد لله بإخلاص توحيده وتحقيق وحدانيته، لا إله إلا هو الواحد في ذاته والعظيم في صفاته والعزيز في فردانيته.

ونشهد لنبيه ورسوله بكمال نبوته وعموم رسالته وتخصيص عبوديته محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى آله وأزواجه وعترته وذريته وأهل بيته ورضي الله عن جميع أصحابه وتابعيهم أبدا بإحسان من أمته وأهل ملته.

One of the principles of the Naqshbandīyyah order is for this supplication to be read repeatedly in the course of making dhikr:

> O my Allāh! You alone are my objective. I seek Your pleasure alone. Therefore confer me with Your love and recognition.

When I read this supplication and pondered over each and every word, I experienced a special type of feeling and emotion. A yearning developed in my heart that if this important supplication is explained in some detail, then – Allāh willing – it will prove beneficial to myself and to other genuine seekers.

I tried to explain and expound on each of these words and read it to my mentor, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* (d. 3 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1412 A.H.), in a special assembly. He expressed his approval and joy at hearing it. This gave me more courage and increased my desire to render this service.

I gave the manuscript of this book to my dear friend, Maulānā Mujīb al-Ghaffār Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the former Shaykh al-Hadīth of Madrasah Mazhar al-ʿUlūm, Benares, for reviewing. He rendered this service with much enthusiasm. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

Ever since that time, I had been thinking about having this valuable book printed but it was not possible. Some time back, my yearning to have it printed intensified. When I reviewed it, I felt that it will prove to be even more beneficial and effective to the reader if I made additions to it from the Qur'ān, Sunnat and the writings and statements of the Sufi masters.

In this regard, when I paged through *Hayāt al-Muslimīn,* the magnum opus of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *rahimahullāh*, I found it to be most useful for the fulfilment of my objective. I therefore quoted its opening sermon with its translation, and then presented the explanation as given by Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat *rahimahullāh*. I then quoted some of its simplified sections which were done by Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Allāh willing, it will prove to be an aid for all of us to acquire a genuine life of the heart. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

Sermon from Hayāt al-Muslimīn

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ اَنْزَلَ فِيْ كِتَابِهٖ:

All praise is due to Allāh taʿālā who revealed in His Book:

اَوَ مَنْ كَانَ مَيْتًا فَاَحْيَيْنٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهٗ نُوْرًا يَّمْشِيْ بِهٖ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَّثَلُهٗ فِي الظُّلُمٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا

Can he who was dead and whom We gave life thereafter, and gave him a light whereby he walks among people – [can he be] equal to the one who is lying in the pits of darkness from which he cannot emerge?[1]

وَالصَّلٰوةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الَّذِيْ شَرَّفَهٗ بِخِطَابِهٖ:

Salutations and peace to His Messenger whom He honoured with His address:

وَكَذٰلِكَ اَوْحَيْنَآ اِلَيْكَ رُوْحًا مِّنْ اَمْرِنَا

In like manner We sent to you an angel by our Command.[2]

وَدَعَا اُمَّتَهٗ اِلٰى جَزِيْلِ ثَوَابِهٖ فِيْ قَوْلِهٖ:

He invited his ummat towards His abundant reward when He said:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَلِلرَّسُوْلِ اِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيْكُمْ

---

[1] Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 122.
[2] Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 52.

O believers! Obey the order of Allāh and the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life.[1]

وَقَادَهُمْ اِلٰى رَفِيْعِ جَنَابِهٖ فِيْ قَوْلِهٖ:

He directed them towards His exalted self when He said:

اُولٰٓئِكَ كَتَبَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمُ الْاِيْمَانَ وَاَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوْحٍ مِّنْهُ

Allāh inscribed īmān in their hearts and helped them by His hidden inspiration.[2]

وَبَعْدُ، فَقَدْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى:

Allāh taʿālā said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ اَوْ اُنْثٰى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ اَجْرَهُمْ بِاَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ.

Whoever did good, be it man or woman, and is a believer, to him We will give a good life. We will grant them their reward for the good deeds which they used to do.[3]

وَقَالَ تَعَالٰى:

Allāh taʿālā said:

وَمَنْ اَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِيْ فَاِنَّ لَهٗ مَعِيْشَةً ضَنْكًا وَّنَحْشُرُهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ اَعْمٰى.

---

[1] Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 24.
[2] Sūrah al-Mujādalah, 58: 22.
[3] Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 97.

Whoever turns away from My remembrance, for him is a life of constriction, and on the day of Resurrection We shall raise him up blind.[1]

Add to the above verses, the following verse which is in reference to the dwellers of the Hell-fire:

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوْتُ فِيْهَا وَلَا يَحْيٰى

Then he will neither die therein (in Hell) nor will he live (a life of comfort).[2]

Although a life devoid of comfort and sweetness is not death in appearance, it is also not a life in the true meaning of the word. Thus, according to the erudite scholars, "a good life" and "a life of constriction" refer to this worldly life. In other words, the real life of this world – of comfort and peace – is enjoyed only by those who are obedient to Allāh *taʿālā*. As for the disobedient ones, just as they are deprived of internal life, they are also deprived of the joy of the external life.[3]

Explanation of the introduction

By Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh*

The introduction to *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* comprises of five themes.

1. Real life in this world and in the Hereafter is reserved solely for Allāh's obedient servants. Those who are disobedient to Allāh *taʿālā* and rebellious are

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[1] Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 124.
[2] Sūrah al-Aʿlā, 13.
[3] *Hayāt al-Muslimīn* – introduction.

deprived of a real life in both worlds. This is proven from a hundred verses of the Qur'ān.

2. The mystery behind the luxuries and comforts which are given in this world for a few days to those who are disobedient to Allāh *taʿālā* and who rebel against Him.

3. Every type of success in this world and the Hereafter, and real and eternal comfort, peace and tranquillity are confined to the Qur'ān and the teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It will be to the Muslims' misfortune and their failure if they leave these two and turn to other ways and procedures.

4. Attention is drawn to present day Muslims who become vexed by calamities and tragedies, and run towards other various means and plans. It is most sad that they do not turn to the procedure which is totally and absolutely beneficial, and whose benefit has been proven through thousands of years of experience. That is, the teachings of the Qur'ān and the instructions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

5. The effectiveness of Qur'ānic and Ḥadīth prescriptions for national success and the repulsing of calamities and miseries.

The explanation of the themes as given by Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* is most beautiful. It must certainly be studied. For the sake of brevity, we are quoting the explanation of the first theme only.

Explanation of the first theme

Real life is reserved solely for Allāh's obedient servants.

> The foundation of your people is solely on Dīn and īmān. Your life is dependent on practising on the Qur'ān. Your success is confined to Allāh's grace – not on your strength, numbers, authority and resources. (Majdhūb)

The Qur'ān uses various words to refer to the teachings which were to come forth via the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. These words include: *rūḥ, ḥayāt* and *nūr*. Observe the following verses:

اَوَ مَنْ كَانَ مَيْتًا فَاَحْيَيْنٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهٗ نُوْرًا يَّمْشِيْ بِهٖ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَّثَلُهٗ فِي الظُّلُمٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا

Can he who was dead and whom We gave life thereafter, and gave him a light whereby he walks among people – [can he be] equal to the one who is lying in the pits of darkness from which he cannot emerge?[1]

وَكَذٰلِكَ اَوْحَيْنَآ اِلَيْكَ رُوْحًا مِّنْ اَمْرِنَا

In like manner We sent to you an angel by our Command.[2]

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَلِلرَّسُوْلِ اِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيْكُمْ

O believers! Obey the order of Allāh and the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life.[3]

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[1] Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 122.
[2] Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 52.
[3] Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 24.

أُولٰٓئِكَ كَتَبَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمُ الْاِيْمَانَ وَاَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوْحٍ مِّنْهُ

Allāh inscribed īmān in their hearts and helped them by His hidden inspiration.[1]

The above verses refer to Qur'ānic teachings as *ḥayāt* (life) and *rūḥ*. These obviously refer to the eternal life of the Hereafter. Ḥadrat ʿUrwah ibn Zubayr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* and others are of the view that it includes this worldly life as well.[2]

The following verses clearly prove that real life and comfort in this world also is the reserve of those who obey Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The disobedient are deprived of a genuine life and real peace even in this world:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ اَوْ اُنْثٰى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ اَجْرَهُمْ بِاَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ.

Whoever did good, be it man or woman, and is a believer, to him We will give a good life. We will grant them their reward for the good deeds which they used to do.[3]

The distinguished scholars of tafsīr including Ḥadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* and others have explained the word "life" in this verse as worldly life. They say that "a good life" refers to that life in which peace and tranquillity are experienced.[4]

This life can be experienced only by those who are blessed with contentment, are pleased with whatever

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[1] Sūrah al-Mujādalah, 58: 22.
[2] *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī* and *Ibn Kathīr*.
[3] Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 97.
[4] *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī*.

Allāh *taʿālā* has decreed for them, and are free from greed and avarice. Obviously a life of this nature can only be conferred to obedient believers, and not to those who are disobedient to Allāh *taʿālā*. In fact, their lives are narrow and tasteless even in the presence of countless "creature comforts", and every type of bounty and wealth. Due to their greed and avarice, they never reach a point of contentment. They are constantly immersed in efforts to increase their wealth. When they experience a situation which is against their mental planning and forecast, then due to their dissatisfaction with divine decree, they become so distressed that they sometimes go to the extent of committing suicide. Many incidents of this nature by affluent people bear testimony to this fact. The following verse makes reference to this theme:

وَمَنْ اَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِيْ فَاِنَّ لَهٗ مَعِيْشَةً ضَنْكًا وَّنَحْشُرُهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ اَعْمٰى.

Whoever turns away from My remembrance, for him is a life of constriction, and on the day of Resurrection We shall raise him up blind.[1]

As regards the constricted life which is promised to those who disregard Allāh's admonitions, some scholars of tafsīr are of the view that it refers to the life of the grave. Others are of the view that it refers to this very life of the world. This is the view of distinguished tafsīr scholars like Ḥaḍrat ʿAṭā' *raḥimahullāh*, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr *raḥimahullāh* and others.[2]

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[1] Sūrah Ṭā Hā, 20: 124.
[2] *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī*.

There is really no contradiction between the two because the life of such people will be constricted in this world and in the grave as well.[1]

Another verse makes reference to the dwellers of the Hell-fire as follows:

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوْتُ فِيْهَا وَلَا يَحْيٰى

Then he will neither die therein (in Hell) nor will he live (a life of comfort).[2]

Although a life devoid of comfort and sweetness is not death in appearance, it is also not a life in the true meaning of the word. Experience testifies to the fact that those who are disobedient to Allāh *taʿālā* can never enjoy the sweetness of life. Firstly because their greed and avarice never permits them to be content, and they are always worried and concerned about increasing their wealth. Furthermore, it is a fact that every hope and every objective of even the greatest of persons can not be fulfilled. In such situations, obedient believers can at least take solace from their satisfaction with divine decree, and when they experience something which is against what they intended, they can nevertheless take comfort from reward in the Hereafter. On the other hand, the disobedient ones are deprived of both, and consequently remain completely stressed and worried. In short, when they realize their objective, they have to worry about safeguarding it. And when they do not realize it, they are filled with grief and worry. In both situations they do not enjoy

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[1] *Bayān al-Qur'ān.*
[2] Sūrah al-Aʿlā, 13.

tranquillity of the heart – which is the essence of comfort and life. A poet says:

> If they do not have the world, they are pained and stressed. If they acquire it, they are captured by its love. In fact, they fall prey to it.

When looking at these three verses collectively, it becomes extremely clear that a real life – which is another name for peace, comfort and tranquillity – is reserved solely for the obedient servants of Allāh *taʿālā* even in this world. The unbelievers and sinners are deprived of it in this world as well, no matter how much physical wealth and possessions they may own. Having the goods of comfort does not necessarily mean that the person will enjoy comfort.

This point is proven from many verses of the Qur'ān, of which Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* quoted 100 in his footnote in the introduction of *Ḥayāt al-Muslimīn*. These verses with their translation is given here.[1]

Note: The 100 verses which were selected by Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* were translated by Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāḥib *raḥimahullāh* and he also signed it at the end. This is to be found in some of the old editions of *Ḥayāt al-Muslimīn.* Unfortunately, some printers have removed it. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, we are working on a separate book comprising of the 100 verses selected by Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *raḥimahullāh*, translated by Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *raḥimahullāh*, together with explanations. This book will be titled *Mawāʿiẓ al-Qur'ān (Mulaqqab bi Sharḥ*

[1] *Ḥayāt al-Muslimīn*, p. 23.

Mi'ah Āyah). We pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable us to complete this task and to inspire us to practise according to its demands. Āmīn.

We will now quote the 25 topics which Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *rahimahullāh* discussed in *Hayāt al-Muslimīn*. They are:

1. Islam and īmān.

2. Acquiring and imparting Islamic knowledge.

3.Studying and teaching the Qur'ān.

4. Love for Allāh and love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

5. Belief in predestination and placing one's trust in Allāh.

6. Beseeching Allāh.

7. Associating with the pious.

8. The life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

9. Fulfilling the rights of Muslims.

10. The rights of one's self.

11. Steadfastness in salāh.

12. Erecting masājid.

13. Remembrance of Allāh.

14. Zakāh.

15. Other charitable and welfare works.

16. Fasting.

17. Hajj.

18. Qurbānī.

19. Income and expenditure.

20. Marriage.

21. Dissociating the heart from this world.

22. Abstaining from sin.

23. Patience and gratitude.

24. Seeking advice.

25. The Muslim identity.

Note:

Ponder over this: From among the actions which are listed for the acquisition of a true and genuine life, Islam and īmān are mentioned first. This is the reality. Īmān is the fundamental cause for the effulgence and life of the heart. My heart therefore demanded that I quote from the scholarly work – *Usūl al-Islam* - of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Sāhib Kādhlawī *rahimahullāh* on the important departments of īmān, viz. Oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*, the concept of messenger-ship, and the Resurrection. Allāh willing, it will be very beneficial to the reader.

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said: If any person thinks of any other action, or feels that a certain section needs to be elaborated, then it can become an addendum to this book.[1]

In emulation of this permission, we will be adding on some good deeds and noble characteristics. We hope that Allāh *taʿālā* accept this addition as He did the original work, that He blesses us with a living heart, and honours us with forgiveness and His special mercy in the Hereafter. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

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[1] *Hayāt al-Muslimīn*, p. 350.

Beloved assistants

May Allāh *taʿālā* fully reward the following for their efforts and assistance in the preparation of this book:

Maulānā Mahbūb Ahmad Nadwī, Maulānā Muhammad ʿUbaydullāh Qamar az-Zamān Nadwī, Maulānā Fīroze ʿĀlam Qāsmī, Maulānā Kamāl Ahmad Nadwī, Maulānā Muhammad Ashraf Afrīqī, Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Qāsmī, Maulānā Nabīl Ahmad Qāsmī and Maulānā Safīyyullāh Tarkesarī.

A few themes from *Tasfīyyatul Qulūb (Shifā'-e-Dil*) of my son, Maulānā Mahbūb Ahmad Nadwī, are quoted in *Hayāt al-Qulūb*. I am thankful to him for this. Maulānā Diyā' ad-Dīn Islāhī wrote a comprehensive impression on this book. I will quote it below for the benefit of the seekers. Once they learn about its usefulness, it will hopefully create a yearning in them to study this book. It may well prove to be an excellent means for their rectitude and rectification.

Another point which came to my mind is that the Qur'ān and Hadīth contain certain words which are not clearly understood immediately. I felt the need to explain them from the authentic books of tafsīr in the hope that when seekers and students read them such meanings are exposed to them which result in the rectification of the heart. This is not far-fetched and certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

Impression as quoted in "Maʿārif"

This is an impression on the book *Tasfīyyatul Qulūb – Shifā'-e-Dil* which is written by Maulānā Mahbūb Ahmad Qamar az-Zamān Nadwī Allāhābādī.

Purity of intention and action, the virtue of knowledge, ailments of the heart, remembrance of Allāh, supplication, salutations to Rasūlullāh

sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam, salāh, patience, abstinence, gratefulness, reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*, fear of Allāh *taʿālā*, this world, taubah and other similar topics clearly show the need to purify the self and rectify one's character. When these themes are quoted in the words of ʿAllāmah Rajab Hambalī *raḥimahullāh*, Ibn al-Qayyim Jauzī *raḥimahullāh* and Imām Abū Hāmid Ghazzālī *raḥimahullāh*, then their effect multiplies several times. Bearing in mind this effectiveness and usefulness, the worthy translator translated the book *Tazkīyyatun Nufūs* into Urdu. The Urdu translation is also widely received. The book under review is the second edition in which some of the texts of the first edition have been simplified and made more flowing.

An added benefit in this second edition is that the honourable father of the translator, Janāb Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib, added a most useful theme comprising of almost 100 pages on blameworthy characteristics. It contains a diagnosis and treatment for spiritual maladies like ostentation, greed, avarice, showing off one's worship, haughtiness, pride, ostentation, jealousy, anger, selfishness, miserliness, love of wealth and praise, futile talk, backbiting and so on. These are presented in a very effective style. The addition of blameworthy characteristics to the discussion on praiseworthy characteristics has increased the value of the book several times.

Maktabah Dār al-Maʿārif Wasīyābād, Allāhābād has been fulfilling the obligation of publishing books of this nature since some time now. One of its objectives is to present Islam's true and original form of Sufism. This was also the distinguishing feature of the Wasīyyullāh khānqāh. The sick society of today is certainly in need of a cure for the heart. It is hoped

that this book will be a means for the fulfilment of this need.[1]

I now address myself and then the entire ummat by quoting the following statement of Hadrat ʿAllāmah ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* which he made in the sermon of his book *Lawāqih al-Anwār fī Tabaqāt al-Akhyār* (*at-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*):

ثم إن من طالع مثل هذا الكتاب ولم يحصل عنده نهضة ولا شوق إلى طريق الله عز وجل فهو والأموات سواء. والسلام.

Any person who studies a book of this nature and does not develop within himself a yearning for Allāh's path, then he and the dead are the same.

Bearing in mind this statement of ʿAllāmah Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* which emanated with a lot of pain and concern, I say that if after writing these themes and after my Muslim brothers read them, we do not develop an interest in treading the true path, then we ought to shed tears of blood. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us through His grace from such a major tribulation. Āmīn.

This manuscript is now being handed over to my son, Muhammad ʿAbdullāh Qāsmī for printing. I make an earnest supplication to Allāh *taʿālā* to embellish this most special of books with its printing and to make beneficial to the ummat. Āmīn.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
Muharram al-Harām 1436 A.H.
Bayt al-Adhkār, Wasīyābād, Allāhābād, U.P.

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[1] Monthly *Maʿārif*, July 2008.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

INTRODUCTION

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muhammad Rābiʿ Hasanī Nadwī Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*

Nāzim of Dār al-ʿUlūm Nadwatul ʻUlamā' Lucknow

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلوة السلام على سيد المرسلين وخاتم النبيين سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين. أما بعد!

No one can deny the importance which the heart and soul enjoy in the human body. A Hadīth clearly states in this regard:

ألا إن في الجسد لمضغة إذا صلحت صلح الجسد كله، وإذا فسدت فسد الجسد كله، ألا وهي القلب.

Remember! There is a piece of flesh in the human body. If it is sound, the entire body is sound. If it is unsound, the entire body becomes unsound. Understand well! It is the heart.

Man's life depends on his soul and it is what keeps him alive. The body obtains physical strength from food and drink. The soul receives strength from good actions. One category of good actions is the one which is done with sincerity and comes with servitude to Allāh *taʿālā*. The other category concerns the rights which exist between fellow humans. As regards the rights of Allāh *taʿālā*, they are either compulsory, obligatory, optional or desirable. The same can be said about mutual rights among humans. Nonetheless, man has been found wanting, and constantly displays shortcomings in his actions.

These can be overcome when a person is introspective and takes stock of himself. Introspection inclines him towards repentance and turning to Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh *taʿālā* has made repentance such that it not only gives life to a person's heart, rather, the most heinous sins and crimes are pardoned in seconds through it. A pious act like taubah takes the place of his sins. In Sūrah al-Furqān, Allāh *taʿālā* speaks about the punishment which will be meted out to the sinners, and excludes from it those who repent. He says:

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَاٰمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللّٰهُ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ حَسَنٰتٍ ط وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا.

Except he who repented and believed and did some good deeds – it is for such that Allāh shall transform their bad deeds into good deeds. Allāh is forgiving, merciful.[1]

Immediately thereafter, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوْبُ إِلَى اللّٰهِ مَتَابًا.

Whoever repents and does good deeds – he truly returns to Allāh.[2]

As regards the purity of the heart and actions which take one closer to Allāh *taʿālā*, the most important point is pure beliefs, and full conviction in the Oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*, the concept of prophet-hood with belief in the finality of the prophet-hood of Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and belief in the Hereafter. As far as actions of the

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[1] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 70.
[2] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 71.

heart are concerned, then together with sincerity and presence of intention, one has to have full conviction and reliance in Allāh *taʿālā*, be grateful at times of prosperity and patient at times of adversity. If he does this, then man who is inhabiting earth establishes a connection with the heavens.

Man's temperaments differ and none has the same temperament and disposition. This is why we find the Sharīʿat taking differences in temperaments into consideration. One person takes into consideration all the actions of the Sharīʿat and the Sunnat, but he focuses more on one particular action. Even then, he is able to reach great heights. In the same way, the objective is one but the means vary.

In the beginning the most effective way of acquiring true īmān, conviction, sincerity, Allāh-recognition, culturing of character, purification of the self, proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*, purity of the heart and soul was through the companionship of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Later on – due to various reasons - the 'ulamā' and Sufi masters gave emphasis to companionship, and abundant dhikr and devotional practices.

None can deny the fact that apart from a divine bestowal, a Muslim can become a perfect Muslim, a true believer and reach great heights through: presence of intention, īmān, self-introspection, following the Sunnat, excessive optional devotions, supplications, seeking forgiveness, salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, recitation of the Qur'ān, glorification of Allāh *taʿālā* and extolling His greatness, love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, love for his family, love for the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* and others, services to mankind, propagating and teaching Dīn, propagation of Islam,

writing and compiling books, spending in charitable works, serving one's parents, maintaining family ties, being of help to those who are afflicted by calamities, concern for one's neighbours, and consideration to other rights and etiquette. However, presence of intention and continuity are very great even if the actions are not many.

Allāh *taʿālā* loves the work of joining the hearts of people to Him. There have been Allāh-fearing personalities in every era who were fulfilling this responsibility. In the not so distant past, Allāh *taʿālā* enabled this task to be fulfilled in a major and extensive manner through Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī *rahimahullāh*, Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh,* Amīr al-Mu'minīn Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd *rahimahullāh* and their deputies and associates. This work was then undertaken by our Dīnī madāris, especially Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband, Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr, Dār al-ʿUlūm Nadwatul ʿUlamā' and other madāris and Dīnī khānqāhs. The Tablīghī Jamāʿat also undertook this task to a certain extent among the masses.

However, Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* fulfilled this task in a most comprehensive manner through his books, writings, letters, statements, teachings and by preparing individuals to this end. Muslihul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib Fatahpūrī Allāhābādī is from among his most distinguished khulafā'. He too rendered this service in a most effective manner in line with the method of his mentor, Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. From among those who are taking the teachings of both into

consideration and rendering sterling services in this regard is Shaykh Tarīqat Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib *mudda zilluhu*. His rank and the work he is doing needs no introduction.

He is spreading the light of Dīn and īmān not only through his writings, articles, lectures and statements; but by travelling to various places as well – thereby providing life to the hearts and glitter to the souls. I perused through his latest work – *Hayāt al-Qulūb fī Ridā' al-Mahbūb* – and, acting under his request, had the honour of writing these few introductory words. This, notwithstanding the fact that this valuable work did not need any introduction from anyone.

In this book, Hadrat Maulānā lays stress on beliefs, acts of worship, ethics, dealings, social interactions, consideration to Allāh's rights and the rights of the creation, and regard for a Dīnī temperament in one's thoughts and views. Generally, when a person is engrossed in one thing, he tends to disregard other aspects. This results in an imbalance in the Dīnī temperament.

We suffice with this and pray that this book proves to be an important work.

Muhammad Rābiʿ Hasanī Nadwī
Nāzim Nadwatul 'Ulamā' Lucknow
01/05/1437 A.H.
11/02/2016

EVALUATION (1)

Hadrat Maulānā Taqī ad-Dīn Sāhib Nadwī
Nāzim Jāmi'ah Islāmīyyah Muzaffarpūr, A'zam Garh, U.P.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Our honourable Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī *dāmat barakātuhum* has requested this insignificant one to write an evaluation on his book *Hayāt al-Qulūb fī Ridā' al-Mahbūb*. I consider it an honour to be included in this spiritual assembly which is really the essence of important books on this subject and the core of the statements of our seniors.

Hadrat Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib had the opportunity of benefiting fully from two famous khānqāhs of our times, viz. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* from whom the love of Allāh was disseminated. I had the opportunity of visiting these two personalities. The affection which Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* showered on Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib was clearly observed. We had the opportunity of presenting ourselves before Hadrat on several occasions.

Hadrat Maulānā is now proliferating and spreading the blessings which he acquired from these two personalities. This is why we see books on spiritual training periodically written by him. Studying and reading these books enables the reader to get a glimpse of the lives of the pious predecessors, and

leaves behind the mark of spirituality on his heart and mind. Hadrat Maulānā penned this work on the same topic. He quoted aspects of whatever he heard from the assemblies of various Sufi masters. I quote one statement from an assembly of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh*:

Listen! It is morning and you people must have had breakfast. However, the breakfast which I would like to offer to you is this duʿā' of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which I very much like:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ رِزْقًا طَيِّبًا، وَعِلْمًا نَافِعًا، وَعَمَلًا مُتَقَبَّلًا

O Allāh! I ask You for pure sustenance, beneficial knowledge and accepted actions.

This duʿā' is short yet comprehensive. We are in need of pure sustenance, and we also require knowledge which is useful and actions which are accepted.

Similarly, Hadrat Maulānā quotes various statements of the seniors, explains them and invites us towards Allāh's love and recognition. This book is most useful and beneficial to every one who is treading the path of Sufism, and especially the 'ulamā' and students. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this effort of Hadrat Maulānā, bless him in his life, and enable the ummat to appreciate him. Āmīn. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā*.

Taqī ad-Dīn Nadwī
10 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1436 A.H.

EVALUATION (2)

Hadrat Maulānā Burhān ad-Dīn Sāhib Sambhalī
Shaykh at-Tafsīr Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā'

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد الأنبياء والمرسلين،
وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين، وبعد!

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, some people are blessed with knowledge and the inspiration to practise on it, and Allāh *taʿālā* then makes them the means for others to obtain knowledge and practise on it. From among these blessed personalities is our honourable Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*. Every now and again, Hadrat Maulānā writes a most useful and valuable book which is not only of benefit to the masses, but a means of enlightenment for the scholars as well; and urges them towards good actions. In the recent past, a few most valuable books have already been published, one of which is a voluminous work of about 600 pages. And now, a book containing priceless themes (although slightly shorter) titled *Hayāt al-Qulūb fī Ridā' al-Mahbūb* has come into the public domain. After reading it I learnt that it is not just one book, but a collection of several priceless books. It is like a manual from which those who are "heart patients" can search for treatments for their respective ailments and cure them. The writings of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* are especially beneficial and noteworthy. I pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to cause this fountain of blessings to flow for a long time, and to inspire those who are thirsty for knowledge and

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practice to select the valuable pearls which it contains. Āmīn.

Was salām
Muḥammad Burhān ad-Dīn Sambhalī
Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow.

IMPRESSION

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ayyūb Sāhib Surtī

I commence in the name of Allāh *taʿālā*. Praise be to Him. Peace and salutations to Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

I intended leaving for Zambia and South Africa on 4th December 2016/4th Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1438 A.H. Before my departure, I phoned my dear friend, Maulānā Dāwūd Vawda Sāhib and informed him of my intended journey. He replied that he was also proceeding to Zambia to spend a few days in the company of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib. I was overjoyed when I heard this because I too would have the honour of spending some time in Hadrat Maulānā's company. Subsequently, I was conferred with this favour in the course of my stay in Zambia.

Hadrat Maulānā presented to me a copy of *Hayāt al-Qulūb fī Ridā' al-Mahbūb* which was still in the process of preparation, and which he was giving to several ʿulamā' for their corrections and views. The fact of the matter is that the nature of this book actually afforded me the honour and a chance to study this book, and an opportunity to rectify myself. Thus, with the intention of my own rectification, I read the book from beginning to end. This book really presents Sufism and tasawwuf in a most authoritative and convincing manner. Hadrat Maulānā embellished it with so many examples, stories and statements of the seniors that only an enemy of the intellect can reject Sufism. Since when was the Sharīʿat and Tarīqat ever separated? Whatever is the Sharīʿat is the Tarīqat, and vice versa. There is only a difference in expression.

We see the terms Islam, īmān and ihsān explained separately in what is popularly known as the Hadīth-e-Jibra'īl. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then said:

هذا جبرئيل جاء ليعلمكم دينكم

This is Jibra'īl who came to teach you your Dīn.

Imām Bukhārī *raḥimahullāh* comments on this statement by saying:

فجعل ذلك كله دينا

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam labelled all three as Dīn.

It is from Hadīth itself that we learn that all three entail Dīn. And another name for ihsān is tasawwuf, sulūk and tazkiyah. Thus, it is a serious error to consider the Tarīqat to be separated from the Sharīʿat.

Hadrat Maulānā presented references for each topic. He did not confine himself to quoting from the seniors only, but from the juniors as well. This is proof of his humility and self-obliteration.

My heart testifies that Allāh *taʿālā* irrigated Hadrat Maulānā with the two fountains of beauty and greatness (Hadrat Aqdas Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib Allāhābādī *raḥimahullāh* and Hadrat Aqdas Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *raḥimahullāh*) and selected him for the benefit of the ummat. Hadrat Maulānā does not confine himself to his place. Rather, he travels to near and distant lands. His presence is a glittering chapter on Sufism. He is true to his name, a moon of the time (Qamar az-Zamān) which does not deprive

any corner of the world of its soft, delicate and splendorous light. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer dry fountains like us with the light of insight, honour us by enabling us to benefit from Ḥaḍrat Maulānā, and to bless us with some of the light of recognition which he has.

Was salām
Muḥammad Ayyūb Surtī
Servant of Majlis Daʿwatul Ḥaqq, Leicester
Servant of Ḥadīth at Dār al-ʿUlūm Falāḥ-e-Dārayn, Tadkeshwar, Gujarat.
19 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1437 A.H./19 December 2016

APPRAISAL

Maulānā Qārī Nāẓir Ḥusayn
Lecturer at Falāḥ-e-Dārayn, Tadkeshwar, Gujarat

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله الذي قال في كتابه الخالد "خلق الموت والحياة ليبلوكم أيكم أحسن عملا"، والصلوة والسلام على رسوله الذي قال: "الموت جسر يوصل الحبيب إلى الحبيب"، وعلى آله وأصحابه الذين جاهدوا في سبيل الله حق جهاده.

Allāh *taʿālā* blessed us with the great bounty of life which is the strongest means by which we can enjoy all religious and worldly bounties and favours. A greater bounty than this is when Allāh *taʿālā* inspires one of His servants – either with a short or long life – to convey as much religious and worldly benefit to Allāh's servants in accordance with Allāh's pleasure.

خير الناس من نفع الناس

The best of people is the one who benefits people.

And Allāh *taʿālā* makes such a person a manifestation of the following Ḥadīth:

طوبى لمن طال عمره وحسن عمله[1]

Glad tidings to the one who has a long life coupled with good deeds.

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[1] الزهد الرقائق لابن المبارك: ج ١، ص ٤٧٢، حديث رقم: ١٣٤٠.

In this regard, our honourable Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī *dāmat barakātuhum* deserves to be congratulated in that Allāh *taʿālā* blessed him with an enviably long life which is filled with religious occupation. Since his youth to now (when he is about 86 years old) he has been immersed in his work with such zeal and enthusiasm which would put the young people to shame. His occupations of the day and night seem to be an exposition of the following advice of his mentor, Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*:

> This body has been given for religious works, so keep it occupied in them. The heart has been given for the love and recognition of the True Beloved, so keep it occupied in that.

To put it in other words: Keep your hands occupied in your work, and your heart with the beloved.

Consequently, Hadrat Maulānā keeps himself fully occupied from morning to night – in fact, to late hours of the night – in his work. Even when he is on a journey, his work of writing or studying a book continues. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless Hadrat with additional good health, and may He enable us to value our time and to put it to correct use. Āmīn.

By the inspiration of Allāh *taʿālā*, Hadrat has written about 70 books already, and these have benefited the masses and the elite. We pray that this series continues. An important book from this series is *Hayāt al-Qulūb fī Ridā' al-Mahbūb*. It enjoys a special position among Hadrat's books. It also deserves more attention due to the fact that in the course of its compilation, Hadrat's son, Maulānā Maqbūl Ahmad Qāsmī and Ammī Jān [Hadrat's wife] were extremely

ill. So much so, they had to be admitted in hospitals in Lucknow, they both went through several stages in their illness and Ammī Jān eventually passed away on 9 Rajab 1437 A.H./17 April 2016. May Allāh *taʿālā* illuminate and cool her resting place, and may He admit her into the highest levels of Paradise. Āmīn.

It is an accepted fact that as long as a servant of Dīn does not receive total support from his family, he cannot render noteworthy services to Dīn. From the brief reference which we made to Hadrat's services, we can gauge the sacrifices of Ammī Jān. Allāh willing, she too will receive a great share of the rewards which are in store for Hadrat's phenomenal services.

By the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, Ammī Jān used to pay particular attention to salāh and recitation of the Qur'ān. She used to personally see to the meals of those who would come to visit Hadrat. According to Hadrat, she was very particular about maintaining family ties. In line with the instruction:

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ

As for the beggar, do not drive him away.[1]

Ammī Jān practised on it totally and completely.

We all know that Hadrat was first married to the daughter of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. When she passed away in 1379 A.H., Hadrat married Ammī Jān. At the time, Hadrat had four young sons from his first marriage. Ammī Jān nurtured them and took care of

[1] Sūrah ad-Duhā: 93: 10.

them with her life and soul, as though they were her own children. They all graduated as ʿulamā', got married and have their own children and grandchildren. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, they are rendering services to Dīn. Their nurturing and upbringing will most certainly prove to be a treasure for Ammī Jān in the Hereafter.

I was writing on my impressions about *Ḥayāt al-Qulūb fī Riḍā' al-Maḥbūb* and the discussion went on to Ammī Jān. I felt it appropriate to write a few lines about her qualities and attributes, after all it is a right which she has over us.

At this point, my heart desires to make a request to Ḥaḍrat and to his sons, Maulānā Maḥbūb Aḥmad Ṣāḥib Nadwī and Maulānā ʿAbdullāh Ṣāḥib Qasmī and others, to prepare a booklet on the life, qualities and devotional practices of Ammī Jān. It will prove to be a guiding lamp for the women who are spiritually associated to Ḥaḍrat, and to other women of the Muslim ummat. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

This book of Ḥaḍrat contains very important and useful themes in which he very beautifully explains the following supplication of the Naqshbandī masters:

> O my Allāh! You alone are my objective. I seek Your pleasure alone. Therefore confer me with Your love and recognition.

Furthermore, it contains explanations of words which are commonly found in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, e.g. *hidāyat, tazkiyah, sharḥ ṣadr, qunūt, sakīnah, īthār, khushūʿ* and so on.

May Allāh *taʿālā* reward Ḥaḍrat with the best of rewards on behalf of the ummat for this effort, and

may He enable us – Hadrat's attendants – and the ummat at large to benefit from this book. Āmīn.

آمين يا أرحم الراحمين، بجاه سيد المرسلين صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين، وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين.

Nāẓir Husayn Hatorwī
Lecturer at Falāh-e-Dārayn, Tadkeshwar
28 Shawwāl 1437 A.H.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

AFFIRMATION[1]

Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbdullāh Sāhib Kāpaudrī
Raʾīs al-Jāmiʿah Falāh-e-Dārayn, Tadkeshwar,
Gujarat

قال الله تعالى: يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَلِلرَّسُوْلِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيْكُمْ.

O believers! Obey the order of Allāh and the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life.[2]

ʿAllāmah Ibn al-Qayyim *rahimahullāh* says beneath the above-quoted verse:

تضمنت هذه الآية أمورا، أحدها: أن الحياة النافعة إنما تحصل بالإستجابة لله ورسوله، فمن لم تحصل له هذه الإستجابة فلا حياة له،

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[1] It is most heartening for me that Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbdullāh Kāpaudrī Sāhib attested to the themes of *Hayāt al-Qulūb fī Ridā' al-Mahbūb* as well as the evaluations and impressions of the ʿulamā'. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards.
It is my ardent supplication that Allāh *taʿālā* enables us to benefit from Hadrat Maulānā's blessed life for a long time to come. Āmīn.
Was salām
Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
Idārah Maʿārif Muslihul Ummat
Dār at-Tazkiyah wa al-Ihsān, Karelī, Allāhābād
12 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1438 A.H.

[2] Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 24.

وإن كانت له حياة بهيمية مشتركة بينه وبين أرذل الحيوانات، فالحياة الحقيقية الطيبة هي حياة من استجاب لله والرسول ظاهرا وباطنا، هؤلاء هم الأحياء وإن ماتوا، وغيرهم أموات وإن كانوا أحياء الأبدان، ولهذا كان أكمل الناس حياة أكملهم استجابة لدعوة الرسول، فإن كل ما دعا إليه ففيه الحياة. (الفوائد: ١٣٢)

We learn from the above that if we accept what Allāh *taʿālā* and His Messenger *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* invited towards and live our lives according to it, we will enjoy a true and genuine life. And if a person follows the desires of his carnal self and commits sins, his heart becomes dead and he is deprived of a true and real life.

ʿAllāmah Ibn Qayyim *raḥimahullāh* says:

رأيت الذنوب تميت القلوب – وقد يورث الذل ادمائها

I have seen sins deadening the hearts, and committing them all the time results in disgrace and humiliation.

The righteous personalities and Sufi masters have prescribed various methods for the revival of dead hearts and the acquisition of a real life. They wrote many useful books on this topic. The great deputies of Ḥaḍrat Ḥājī Imdādullāh Ṣāḥib Muhājir Makkī *raḥimahullāh* and their associates have rendered sterling services in this regard.

Included in this golden chain is Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Ṣāḥib Allāhābādī on whom the companionship and attention of the seniors have left a deep impression. He has written various books on different topics for the rectification of the hearts and souls, and is rendering a great

service in this way. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

In the book under review – *Ḥayāt al-Qulūb fī Riḍā' al-Maḥbūb* – he explained a principle of the Naqshbandī masters in a most heartening and satisfactory manner which is extremely beneficial for the true seekers. The great work which Allāh *taʿālā* is taking from Ḥaḍrat Maulānā despite his old age and various tragedies is most enviable. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless him with long life with wellness for the reformation and rectification of the Muslim nation. Āmīn.

The book contains a few impressions written by very honourable ʿulamā'. This demonstrates the value of this book. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer the best of rewards to Ḥaḍrat Maulānā and enable us to benefit. Āmīn.

Was salām
ʿAbdullāh Kāpaudrī
6 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1438 A.H.
4 February 2017

HAYĀT AL-QULŪB

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله الذي خلق فسوى، وقدر فهدى، وجعل لعباده طريق الخير والرشاد، وطريق الشر والفساد، فقال تعالى: وهدينه النجدين.

أحمده سبحانه وتعالى هدى من عباده من شاء إلى سلوك طريق الخير والرشاد، واشقى من كتب عليه الشقاء فأعرض عن الخير وسلك سبيل الغواية والفساد، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، إليه المرجع والمعاد، وأشهد أن سيدنا محمدا عبده ورسوله أبان لأمته طريق الهدى وأمرهم بسلوكه وأوضح لهم طريق الغواية والفساد وحذرهم منه.

اللّٰهُمَّ صل وسلم وبارك على عبدك ورسولك سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه ومن اقتدى أثره وسلك نهجه إلى يوم الدين. (مجلة المدرسة الصولتية ١٤٣٤هـ و١٤٣٥هـ)

صل يا رب على رأس فريق الناس
منه للخلق أمان بزمان الباس

The Qur'ān and Ḥadīth mention the greatness and virtue of duʿā'. Allāh *taʿālā* issues a clear order in this regard to His servants:

أُدْعُوْنِيْ اَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

Call on Me and I will respond to your call.

Based on this, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

من فتح له منكم باب الدعاء فتحت له أبواب الرحمة.[1]

The one for whom the door of duʿā' is opened (i.e. he is given the inspiration to make duʿā') has actually got the doors of mercy opened to him.

Other transmissions contain the words: "the doors of acceptance have been opened to him". When a person gets the inspiration to make duʿā', we can conclude he has also received the acceptance of his supplications. Can the greatness of duʿā' ever be disregarded bearing in mind the following statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

الدعاء مخ العبادة[2]

Duʿā' is the essence and core of worship.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

الدعاء هو العبادة[3]

Duʿā' is in fact worship.

Another Hadīth refers to duʿā' as the weapon of a believer:

الدعاء سلاح المؤمن[1]

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[1] سنن الترمذي، حديث: ٣٥٤٨.

[2] سنن الترمذي في الدعوات، حديث: ٣٣٧١. فيض القدير للمناوي: ج ٣، ص ٥٤٠.

[3] سنن الترمذي، حديث: ٣٢٤٧.

Duʿā' is the weapon of a believer.

Duʿā' also repulses calamities. A Ḥadīth states:

عن أبي أمامة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حصنوا أموالكم بالزكاة، وداووا مرضاكم بالصدقة، واستقبلوا أمواج البلاء بالدعاء والتضرع.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Abū Umāmah raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Protect your wealth by giving zakāh, treat your sick people through charity, and repulse the waves of calamities through duʿā' and beseeching [Allāh taʿālā].

We learn from the above teachings that Allāh *taʿālā* wants and likes it when His servants make duʿā' to Him for the fulfilment of their needs, and present their needs before Him so that He could confer them with acceptance.

Servitude also demands that a servant expresses his helplessness before his Master irrespective of whether he sees his duʿā's accepted or not. A point which needs to be understood is that bearing in mind that duʿā' is the essence of worship, when a person makes duʿā' he will certainly receive the reward for worship irrespective of whether he receives what he asked for or not. This is why we have to continue making duʿā' and never get fed up of it. As stated by Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *raḥimahullāh*.

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[1] فيض القدير للمناوي: ج ٣، ص ٥٤٠.

[2] شعب الإيمان للبيهقي: ج ٣، ص ٢٨٢. باب في الزكاة، فصل فيمن أتاه الله مالا من غير مسألة. الترغيب والترهيب: ج ١، ص ٥٨٣.

Maulānā Muḥammad ʿĀqil Mazāhirī's article on duʿā'

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad ʿĀqil Ṣāḥib, the head lecturer at Mazāhir al-ʿUlūm Sahāranpūr, has written a most comprehensive booklet titled *Bayān ad-Duʿā'*. I take the honour of quoting a few lines from it. He writes:

> Duʿā' must be made with absolute submission and attention. If there is any delay in the acceptance of duʿā', one must never feel despondent. At this point I recall a most appropriate and rare Ḥadīth which is related in Ibn Mājah Sharīf:
>
> ضَحِكَ رَبُّنَا مِنْ قُنُوْطِ عِبَادِهِ وَقُرْبِ غِيَرِهِ.[1] قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ أَوَ يَضْحَكُ الرَّبُّ، قَالَ نَعَمْ. قُلْتُ: لَنْ نَعْدِمَ مِنْ رَبٍّ يَضْحَكُ خَيْرًا.
>
> *Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Allāh is amused by the despondency of His servants despite Allāh's gifts being so close by.*
>
> In other words, some servants perceive a delay in the acceptance of their duʿā's and become despondent, while Allāh *taʿālā* has already decreed to soon give them what they asked for. It is due to their hastiness and impatience that they lose hope.

[1] غِيَرِ كَدِيَةٍ وزنًا ومعنًى كما في حديث الديات: أَلَا تَقْبَلُ الْغِيَرَ.

The Ḥadīth goes on to say that a Ṣaḥābī asked Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: "Does Allāh *taʿālā* also laugh (at a servant's despondency)?" Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "Yes." The Ṣaḥābī said: "If that is the case we can never be deprived of the gifts and bestowals of such a generous Sustainer."

This is because instead of being displeased by His servants' immaturity and foolishness, He laughs. This is a proof of great mercy and leniency. Glory to Allāh! What an excellent deduction made by this Ṣaḥābī! May Allāh *taʿālā* be pleased with him.

Thus, we must not lose hope when there is a delay in the acceptance of duʿā's. There are also certain prerequisites for the acceptance of duʿā's, and we must think about them. One prerequisite is that the person's sustenance must be lawful. Nowadays the issue of lawful sustenance is a very delicate issue. Also, when we talk about the acceptance of duʿā's, it does not mean that the person will definitely get what he asks for. Rather, if it is not destined for him, then in its place, a calamity and misery is removed; or the person receives a reward equal to it in the Hereafter. This is mentioned in the Aḥādīth.[1]

[1] Maulānā Muḥammad ʿĀqil Ṣāḥib: *Bayān ad-Duʿā'*.

The element of servitude in duʿā'

In line with the approval of Allāh *taʿālā*, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* opened a wide door of duʿā', and there is no worldly and Dīnī need for which he did not make duʿā' either for himself or for the entire ummat. Rasūlullāh's servitude and absolute submission are amply demonstrated in his duʿā's just as his perfect prophet-hood is displayed in his rules and regulations.

Making duʿā' entails following the Sunnat

Those who have made duʿā' an intrinsic part of their lives and are following Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in this regard need to be congratulated. Those ʿulamā' also need to be applauded who have prepared various collections of duʿā's and presented them to the ummat, e.g. *Hisn Hasīn, Kitāb al-Adhkār* and so on. Then there is the well-known collection titled *Munājāt Maqbūl* which is compiled by Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. In it he has included many masnūn duʿā's and divided them into seven stations so that every Muslim may read one station daily with full concentration. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *rahimahullāh* with the best of rewards. Āmīn.

A comprehensive statement of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat on duʿā'

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* said the following in the beginning of one of his assemblies:

Listen! It is morning and you people must have had breakfast. However, the breakfast which I would like to offer to you is this duʿā' of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which I very much like:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ رِزْقًا طَيِّبًا، وَعِلْمًا نَافِعًا، وَعَمَلًا مُتَقَبَّلًا

O Allāh! I ask You for pure sustenance, beneficial knowledge and accepted actions.

This duʿā' is so short yet comprehensive. We are in need of pure sustenance, and we also require knowledge which is useful and actions which are accepted. Our physical life is dependent on pure sustenance, our spiritual life is dependent on beneficial knowledge, and accepted actions entail our success in the Hereafter. Thus, in this short duʿā', Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* asked for success in both worlds and did a great favour to us because it is now Sunnat for us to make this duʿā'. By making this duʿā', we will automatically get the honour of making duʿā', and in addition to it, we will receive the reward of following the Sunnat.

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* goes on to say:

Paradise belongs to Allāh *taʿālā* alone, He created it for His servants and He wants them to ask Him for Paradise. This is why we ought to ask Him for Paradise. I am saying this to you that you must not allow a single day to pass without having asked Allāh *taʿālā* for Paradise at least once or twice. At the same time, ask Him for refuge from the Hell-fire. I request you to memorize the duʿā' of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which I quoted to you and to say it in the exact words because they emerged from his blessed mouth and have already gained acceptance by Allāh *taʿālā*. When we make duʿā' in the words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then there is more hope of its acceptance. The duʿā' is:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا قَرَّبَ اِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ وَعَمَلٍ، وَاَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمِنْ حَالِ اَهْلِ النَّارِ وَمَا قَرَّبَ اِلَيْهَا.

O Allāh! I beg You for Paradise and the ability to say and do the things which will take me close to it. I seek refuge in You from the Hell-fire, the condition of the inmates of Hell and anything which would take me close to it.

The easiest way of acquiring sustenance and Paradise is that together with good deeds, a person must constantly make duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* and ask Him for these. Allāh *taʿālā* loves it when His servants beg of Him. In fact, He commands it:

وَاسْئَلُوا اللّٰهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

Ask Allāh of His grace.[1]

In his commentary to the above verse, the author of *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī* quotes the following narration:

عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال سلوا الله تعالى من فضله فإن الله تعالى يحب أن يسأل.[2]

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Ask Allāh taʿālā of His grace because He loves to be asked.

Ḥadrat Ibn ʿUyaynah said that Allāh *taʿālā* instructed us to ask Him so that He may give to His servants what they ask for.

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 32.

[2] روح المعاني: ج ٥، ص ٢١.

The marginal notes of *Jalālayn* quote a Hadīth from *Tafsīr al-Madārik* which states that Allāh *taʿālā* is displeased with the person who does not ask Him of His grace. Furthermore, Allāh *taʿālā* withholds a lot of good from His servants and says: I will not give all this good to My servants for as long as they do not ask Me.

We learn from these narrations that it is desirable for us to ask Allāh *taʿālā* for His grace and favours. It is so liked by Him that not asking Him results in His wrath and displeasure. Thus, we ought to ask Allāh *taʿālā* for His bounties, especially Paradise which is a very great bounty. We must not sit back as though we are totally independent because this is abhorred by Him. A poet says:

> When Allāh *taʿālā* Himself wants us to ask Him for His favours and bounties, it is most disrespectful to act independent and disregard Him.[1]

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a comprehensive article on the subject of duʿā'! We ought to imprint it in our hearts and practise on it. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone. (compiler)

The duʿā's of the righteous should also be emulated

In addition to the masnūn duʿā's [from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*], we also find some duʿā's of the true deputies and heirs of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* rendered in Arabic, Persian and other languages. These duʿā's are in line with the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Thus, if a person makes

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[1] *Maʿrifat Haq*, Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1389 A.H.

it a habit of reading their duʿā's as well, then there is no harm in it. In fact, the seniors and elders taught their disciples to put them into practice. One such duʿā' is the following.

> O my Allāh! You alone are my objective. I seek Your pleasure alone. Therefore confer me with Your love and recognition.

O my Allāh! You alone are my objective…

Explanation of the above duʿā':

Glory to Allāh! This is a most comprehensive duʿā'. This is why the seniors speak of its greatness and importance. The Naqshbandī masters have based their way on eleven words, one of which is known as *bāzgasht*. This means that while a person is engaged in dhikr, he must make this duʿā' with utmost servitude:

> O my Allāh! You alone are my objective. I seek Your pleasure alone. Therefore confer me with Your love and recognition.[1]

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* says: Our father, Hadrat Shāh ʿAbd ar-Rahīm Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, used to say that it is not permissible for a seeker to be unmindful of this duʿā' because whatever we acquired was through its blessings.

The purpose of this duʿā' is that if in the course of his dhikr, a seeker experiences joy, effulgence or sees something of the unseen, he must not be deceived by

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[1] *Tadhkirah Mashā'ikh Naqshbandīyyah Mujaddidīyyah*, p. 211.

it and not consider these things to be his objective. This is because, let alone gaining access to Allāh's being, even if a seeker travels for hundreds and thousands of years in just one attribute of Allāh *taʿālā*, it is impossible for him to complete this journey.

Hadrat Khwājah Naqshband *rahimahullāh* said:

> Whatever is seen, heard and learnt is apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. They must be negated through the "Lā" in the kalimah tayyibah (Lā Ilāha Illallāh).

Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* says:

> O brother! Allāh has limitless courts. When you reach a certain court, do not stop there under the assumption that you have reached your destination. Rather, you have to traverse other stations further on.

On seeing the greatness and importance of this duʿā', my heart imposed on me to explain it and expound on it to a certain extent. In this way, I myself will experience joy and I will have the opportunity of enabling my beloveds and associates in the path to experience some joy as well. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

After this concise prelude, a short explanation of each word of this duʿā' is presented.

O my Allāh!

Ilāhī: This is the first word of this duʿā' – O my Allāh! The word "ilāh" means "a deity". Although it is linguistically applicable to every deity – whether true

or not – it is now used exclusively for the true deity. *Tafsīr Bayḍāwī* states:

> Just as the word "ilāh" is used for a deity, in certain respects it refers to a being regarding whom the intellects have been left astounded. In other respects, it refers to the being from whom peace is experienced. It is Allāh *taʿālā* alone that when the hearts engage in His remembrance, they experience peace and tranquillity. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:
>
> اَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ
>
> *Listen! It is in the remembrance of Allāh that the hearts experience tranquillity.*
>
> The word ilāh also refers to a place of refuge. Is there anyone greater than Allāh *taʿālā* who gives refuge to those who are afflicted?[1]

In addition to the above meanings of the word "ilāh", Maulānā Muftī Shakīl Aḥmad Sāḥib Sītāpūrī quotes several other opinions in his *at-Taqrīr al-Ḥāwī Sharḥ al-Bayḍāwī*. We are quoting the third and fourth opinions. The third view is that the word ilāh is derived from *alihtu ilā fulānin* which means "I went to such and such person and acquired peace and tranquillity from him." The word ilāh will therefore refer to the one from whom peace is acquired. And Allāh *taʿālā* is known as "Allāh" because the hearts engage in His remembrance and acquire tranquillity. As stated by Allāh *taʿālā*:

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[1] *Tafsīr Bayḍāwī*, p. 4.

اَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ

Listen! It is in the remembrance of Allāh that the hearts experience tranquillity.

Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

> Glory to Allāh! Look at how sweet Allāh's name is! When I engage in His remembrance, my soul and my life become completely and totally sweet.

In addition to this, the souls of the believers acquire Allāh's recognition and then experience tranquillity.

The fourth view is that the word ilāh is derived from *aliha* which means: "to be distressed by a calamity which has befallen one". From there, the word *alihahu* is used. It means: To remove the calamity of the distressed person and to give him refuge. Thus, the word ilāh is used for a place of refuge. A deity is referred to as ilāh because a distressed person takes refuge in the deity; and the deity gives refuge to the one who takes refuge in him.[1]

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent explanation of the word ilāh. It deserves to be imprinted in our hearts. Thus, it is obligatory on us to make ourselves the beloveds of that Pure Being, as stated by Khwājah Muhammad Naqshband *rahimahullāh* in a couplet in one of his letters:

> The True Beloved is living and existent in this world, yet we disregard Him. It is most astonishing that we do not become His lovers. Similarly, the drink of love is

[1] *At-Taqrīr al-Hāwī fī Hull Tafsīr al-Baydāwī*, vol. 1, p. 50.

to be found in the goblet, but we do not drink it and become intoxicated by it.

The same meaning is conveyed in the following narration of *Saḥīḥ Muslim*:

سَبَقَ الْمُفَرِّدُوْنَ. قَالُوْا: وَمَا الْمُفَرِّدُوْنَ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ؟ قَالَ: اَلذَّاكِرُوْنَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ.

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "The mufarridūn have surpassed everyone." The Ṣaḥābah asked: "O Rasūlullāh! Who are the mufarridūn?" He replied: "They are the men and women who remember Allāh excessively."

Ḥaḍrat Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* translates it as follows in *Faḍā'il-e-Aʿmāl*: "Those who remember Allāh ardently and lovingly have surpassed everyone."

In his commentary to *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, ʿAllāmah Nawawī *raḥimahullāh* quotes another narration as follows:

هُمُ الَّذِيْنَ اهْتَزُّوْا فِيْ ذِكْرِ اللهِ تَعَالٰى أَيْ لَهَجُوْا بِهِ.[1]

The mufarridūn are those who are fervent in Allāh's remembrance. In other words, they are mad about His remembrance.

Bearing in mind this high status of Allāh's remembrance, the Naqshbandī masters commenced their duʿā' with the word "Ilāhī" (O my Allāh). There can be no better way of commencing a duʿā' because Allāh *taʿālā* alone is worshipped, He alone is asked

[1] مسلم بشرح النووي: ج ٩، ص ٤.

for help, and He alone is the refuge and place of sanctuary. This is why He alone will be beseeched and before Him alone will we present our needs. Furthermore, the servant made his supplication even more emotional by saying "my Allāh". In this way, he has spurred Allāh's mercy and response. Like a child who calls on his mother by saying "my mother". The mother becomes restless, runs to her child, embraces him in her lap of love, and breastfeeds him. Maulānā Rūm *raḥimahullāh* expresses this reality in the following couplet:

> As long as a child does not cry, the source of the mother's milk does not become agitated. As long as the cloud does not cry, the garden does not become green and lush.

In the same way, as long as a servant does not cry and weep before Allāh *taʿālā*, His ocean of mercy is not agitated. The fact of the matter is that who else is there to whom a servant could call out. This is because Allāh's essence combines all attributes and perfections. He has no partner whatsoever. Look at the following love-filled couplet of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh*:

> Tell me, to whom other than Him can I offer myself? Bring and show to me if there is anyone like Him!

You alone are my objective:

By saying "O my Allāh" in the beginning, the servant negates all gods and attests to one Allāh alone. This marks the negation of obvious or outward polytheism. By acknowledging that Allāh *taʿālā* alone is his objective, the servant is negating subtle or concealed polytheism. In other words, he has freed

himself from ostentation. After all, an ostentatious person does good deeds but with the intention of everything other than Allāh, viz. the acquisition of wealth, property, authority and popularity; and he makes these things his objectives.

Thus, we see Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* defining ostentation as follows:

طَلَبُ الْجَاهِ بِوَاسِطَةِ الْعِبَادَاتِ

Seeking position through acts of worship.

This includes making wealth, property, honour and popularity one's objectives.

Maulānā Thānwī's Explanation

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *rahimahullāh* writes a very noteworthy explanation in his *Furūʿ al-Īmān*. He says that two meanings of tauhīd have been established from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. One is:

لا معبود إلا الله

There is no god except Allāh.

The other is:

لا مقصود إلا الله

There is no objective except Allāh.

The affirmation of the first meaning is most obvious, i.e. there is no god or deity apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. The second meaning is affirmed through a statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in which he referred to ostentation as "minor polytheism":

إِنَّ يَسِيْرَ الرِّيَاءِ شِرْكٌ[1]

Even a little ostentation is polytheism.

When it comes to ostentation, whatever is apart from Allāh is not the god or deity, rather it is the objective. Since all apart from Allāh being the objective is referred to as polytheism, then the reality of tauhīd which is the opposite of polytheism will be that Allāh *taʿālā* alone must be the objective; anything apart from Allāh *taʿālā* must never be the objective. This is the meaning of

لا مقصود إلا الله

There is no objective except Allāh.[2]

Note: Look at the excellent explanation of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *rahimahullāh* as regards the two meanings of tauhīd which have been established from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It demonstrates Hadrat's proficient knowledge and wisdom. It is essential for us that just as we believe Allāh *taʿālā* to be the only God, we must make Allāh's pleasure the sole objective in all our good deeds. We must not include anyone else so that we are protected against ostentation – i.e. subtle polytheism – and we acquire pure tauhīd. (compiler)

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[1] تهذيب الكمال عن معاذ بن جبل: ج ١٤، ص ٥٥٦. مشكوة المصابيح حديث ٥٢٥٧، باب الرياء والسمعة.

[2] *Furūʿ al-Īmān*, p. 16.

Maulānā Muḥammad ʿĀṣim Ṣāḥib's article on tauḥīd

Maulānā Muḥammad ʿĀṣim Ṣāḥib, a resident of Kautlah Aʿẓam Garh, was a special disciple of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib Partābgarhī *raḥimahullāh* and had a very strong bond with him. He wrote a most informative explanation to the following couplet of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib Partābgarhī *raḥimahullāh*:

> I am intoxicated by tauḥīd; this is the Sunnat way. If I were to give my heart to anyone, it will be a bidʿat.

In this article, he provides a detailed explanation of tauḥīd, Sunnat and bidʿat. I feel that the explanation on tauḥīd should be quoted here. The remaining explanations can be found in the original book *Fayḍān-e-Muḥabbat Sharḥ ʿIrfān-e-Muḥabbat*. In fact, it is my request that the reader certainly reads it. Allāh willing, the reader will find the entire article rekindling one's īmān. The Maulānā writes:

The above-quoted couplet contains three words, viz. tauḥīd, Sunnat and bidʿat. As long as these three words are not understood correctly, the depth, comprehensiveness, delicateness and sweetness of this couplet cannot be enjoyed fully. These three words will therefore be explained in some detail, and I will then present the meaning of this couplet according to my understanding.

Tauḥīd:

The most important and fundamental factor for Allāh's correct recognition lies in the correct knowledge and concept of tauḥīd. The thing which comes as an obstacle in a servant's path of correct actions and proximity to Allāh *taʿālā* is his incorrect

idea about tauḥīd. As long as a person's belief in tauḥīd will not be correct, crookedness will remain in his actions.

The first step in tauḥīd entails negating all apart from Allāh *taʿālā* in every respect and in every part of life. The entire universe and all incidents which take place in this world are giving an irrefutable testimony to tauḥīd. They are saying that their Creator and Master is solely one all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise and all-aware Allāh *taʿālā*. Since He did not need the help of anyone in the creation of man and this entire universe, how can it be possible for Him to need or even tolerate any partner in nurturing and controlling them?! Allāh *taʿālā* repeatedly says in the Qur'ān:

اِلٰهُكُمْ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ

Your God is just one God.

He says this with emphasis:

اِنَّ اِلٰهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ

Your God is most certainly one.

قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ

O my beloved [Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam]! Say to the people: He is Allāh, the one.

Thus, genuine faith in *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* is the foundation and basis of Islam. If tauḥīd is found in a person, there is the possibility of overlooking his shortcomings in good actions. But in the absence of tauḥīd, no action is accepted.

Tauḥīd means that a servant must have full conviction that Allāh *taʿālā* is one and He has no partner. Terms such as present, absent, together, separated, direction, place, motion, stillness, etc. are not applicable to Him. He is not limited, rather He is limitless. He is neither tangible nor intangible. He is neither soul nor body. Something which is tangible needs an object or substance, an intangible needs a place, a body needs different parts. On the other hand, Allāh *taʿālā* is free from every need and pure from every defect. He neither has a father to pressurize Him nor a son to induce Him. He does not have an equal to whom He has to be indebted. There are no changes in His being and His attributes, nor in His power and authority whereby He needs someone's help. Everything is subservient to His will; He does as He wills. He has knowledge of everything. His rule extends to the entire world. All His injunctions are correct and based on wisdom. Everything is His creation and dependent on Him while He is not dependent on anyone. The creation can do nothing to Him. Honour and humiliation, life and death, affluence and poverty – everything is destined by Him. Therefore, He alone is worthy of hope and fear. He is all-knowing and all-aware, He is also all-hearing and all-seeing, He is the Living and the Upholder of all, He is most kind and all-merciful. He has power over everything, and is pure from all faults and defects. There is nothing similar to Him.

If a person's heart is illuminated by the effulgence of Allāh-recognition and the belief of tauḥīd becomes firmly embedded in it, it is impossible for him not to carry out Allāh's orders and to take a step against His pleasure. As for the one who makes claims to Allāh's recognition but disregards carrying out Allāh's orders, he is certainly not true in his claims.

The fact of the matter is that when Allāh-recognition and tauḥīd conquer a heart, then that same heart tramples and destroys the entire universe; and nothing which negates tauḥīd is able to live in it. The servant, together with all his capabilities, remains engrossed in seeking Allāh *taʿālā* and obtaining His pleasure. His heart experiences peace and tranquillity only in Allāh's obedience. In fact, it is this very obedience which becomes the nourishment for his heart. Now whatever he sees, hears, thinks and does – everything is within the circle of Allāh's orders.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī's letter on the virtues of kalimah ṭayyibah and tauḥīd

There is nothing more beneficial than the kalimah – *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* – to repulse the wrath of Allāh *taʿālā*. Since this kalimah repulses that wrath of Allāh *taʿālā* which was the cause of being cast into the Hell-fire, it will be even more beneficial in other forms of wrath and anger which are of a lower level. Why should this kalimah not repulse Allāh's wrath when a servant reads it repeatedly, negates everything apart from Him, turns away from everything else, and makes Allāh *taʿālā* his focus of attention and his true God!? The cause of Allāh's anger was the servant's focus and attention to other things. When his focus turned away from everything else and directed itself to one central point [Allāh *taʿālā*], His anger no longer remained.

We can observe this reality in our visual world. For example, a master is displeased with his slave and becomes angry at him. The slave, by virtue of his

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[1] *Fayḍān-e-Muḥabbat*, pp. 99-102.

good temperament, turns his focus from everything else and directs it at his master. The master will automatically develop kindness and affection towards his slave, and his anger and displeasure will dissipate. I consider this kalimah ṯayyibah to be the key to those 99 treasures of mercy which have been reserved for the Hereafter.

There is no better intermediary than the kalimah ṯayyibah for the removal of the pitch darkness of unbelief and the filth of polytheism. Any person who affirms to this kalimah and acquires even a little īmān even if he may be (due to his misfortune) committing (certain) customs of unbelief and (some) evils of polytheism, there is hope that through the intercession of this kalimah he will (eventually) be removed from the punishment and saved from remaining eternally in the Hell-fire.

The blessings of kalimah ṯayyibah

Now listen to some of the virtues of this kalimah:

> Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: Any person who says *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* with a true heart shall enter Paradise.

Short-sighted people express their astonishment at how a person will enter Paradise merely by saying *Lā Ilāha Illallāh*? The fact of the matter is that they do not know the reality of this kalimah. I feel that even if the entire world was to utter this kalimah just once, there is the possibility of Allāh *taʿālā* pardoning them and admitting them into Paradise. I also feel that if this sanctified kalimah was to be distributed in the entire world, it will suffice everyone forever and ever, and it will satiate every single one. And if the second part of the kalimah is attached to it – i.e. Muḥammad

Rasūlullāh – then what can be said of the blessings of this kalimah!?

These two kalimahs – *Lā Ilāha Illallāh Muḥammadur Rasūlullāh* – combine the excellences of wilāyat and nubūwwat (close friendship and prophet-hood), and are harbinger for the good fortune of these two excellences.

O Allāh! Do not deprive us of the blessings of the kalimah ṭayyibah, keep us steadfast on it, cause our death while we are firm on it, and resurrect us with those who affirmed it. admit us into Paradise through the honour and sanctity of those who conveyed it to us – the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*.

The greatness of this kalimah manifests itself in line with the stages of the one who reads it. The higher the rank of the one who reads it, the greater the effects of this kalimah.

يزيدك وجهه حسنا إذا ما زدته نظرا

The more you look at his face, the more beautiful it will seem to you.

I do not think that there can be a greater wish than the wish of sitting in one corner and repeating the kalimah ṭayyibah. But what can we do, all our hopes cannot be realized. We become negligent and we also have to interact with our fellow creations (for the fulfilment of our rights).

ربنا أتمم لنا نورنا واغفر لنا إنك على كل شيء قدير. سبحان ربك رب العزة عما يصفون، وسلام على المرسلين، والحمد لله رب العالمين.[1]

Hold on firmly to the kalimah tauḥīd and istighfār

عن أبي بكر الصديق رضي الله عنه عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: عليكم بلا إله إلا الله والاستغفار، فأكثروا منها فإن إبليس قال: أهلكت الناس بالذنوب وأهلكوني بلا إله إلا الله والاستغفار، فلما رأيت ذلك أهلكتهم بالأهواء وهم يحسبون أنهم مهتدون.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Hold on to Lā Ilāha Illallāh and seeking forgiveness, and repeat them excessively because Iblīs said: "I destroyed people through sins and they destroyed me with Lā Ilāha Illallāh and seeking forgiveness. When I saw this, I destroyed them through vain desires while they assume that they are guided."

Another Ḥadīth states:

عن عثمان بن عفان رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من مات وهو يعلم أن لا إله إلا الله دخل الجنة.

Ḥaḍrat ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said:

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[1] *Tajalliyyāt Rabbānī – Tarjumah Wa Talkhīṣ – Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī*, vol. 2, p. 30.

[2] مجمع الزوائد، رقم ١٧٥٧٤.

Whoever dies while having full conviction that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh shall enter Paradise.[1]

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to read to us an important article on the levels of tauhīd from a Persian book. I am quoting it below. It would certainly prove beneficial.

The levels of tauhīd

Tauhīd is of different levels: (1) tauhīd īmānī, (2) tauhīd ʿilmī, (3) tauhīd hālī, (4) tauhīd ilāhī.

Tauhīd īmānī

This refers to affirming in the heart and expressing with the tongue that Allāh *taʿālā* is alone as regards His divinity and right of being worshipped. This results from affirming Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and having full conviction in the truthfulness of whatever he said. It can be learnt from external knowledge. The benefit of holding on to this tauhīd is that the person gains freedom from polytheism and joins the ranks of Islam.

Based on the fact that this level of tauhīd is from among the essentials of īmān, the honourable Sufis are equal in this regard with other believers in general. However, they do enjoy a special and unique status on the basis of other levels of tauhīd.

Tauhīd ʿilmī

This is related to ʿilm-e-bāṭin (internal spiritual knowledge). It is known as ʿilm-e-yaqīn (knowledge of

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[1] Marginal notes of *Tafsīr Mazharī*, pārā 26, p. 431.

certainty). This *tauḥīd* is acquired when a person under the guidance of sulūk knows with certainty that the only real existence and absolute doer is none other than Allāh *taʿālā*. He considers all the beings, attributes and actions of all the creations to be absolutely nothing in comparison to the Being, attributes and actions of Allāh *taʿālā*. He considers the light of other beings to be solely from the absolute Being, and believes in their attributes of light solely from the light of the absolute attribute [of Allāh *taʿālā*].

Consequently, no matter where he sees any knowledge, power, will, hearing and seeing; he considers it to be from among the effects of the knowledge, power, will, hearing and seeing of Allāh *taʿālā*. Based on this, all other attributes of the creation must be understood in the same light. Tauḥīd ʿilmī is the first level from among the levels of tauḥīd of the elite Sufis.

Tauḥīd ḥālī

The condition of tauḥīd becomes an intrinsic attribute of the being of the muwaḥḥid (monotheist). All dark customs wane and become non-entities in the light of his light of tauḥīd. The light of this knowledge of tauḥīd becomes concealed and absorbed in his illuminated condition – just as the light of the stars are concealed in the light of the sun.

فلما استبان الصبح أدرج ضوءه – باسفاره أضواء نور الكواكب

When the morning becomes bright, its glittering light and whiteness absorbs the brightness of the stars.

Tauḥīd ilāhī

Since eternity, Allāh *taʿālā* is essentially and absolutely One in His Being and in His attributes (and not by anyone saying this about Him).

كَانَ اللهُ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْءٌ

Allāh taʿālā was existing when everything else was non-existent.

وَالْآنَ كَمَا كَانَ

Even now, He is one and unique exactly as He was.

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهُهُ

Everything apart from His essential Being is bound to destruction.[1]

Note: Glory to Allāh. What an excellent explanation. May Allāh *taʿālā* honour us with the highest levels of tauḥīd. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

Allāh is the sole helper

Just as Allāh *taʿālā* alone is worshipped and He is our sole objective in worship, in like manner we must believe that His help alone is to be sought. We say this repeatedly and acknowledge it in every rakʿat of our ṣalāh when we say:

اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ

You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help.

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[1] *Tadhkirah Muṣliḥul Ummat*, vol. 2, pp. 481-483.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَرَبُّنَا الرَّحْمٰنُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلٰى مَا تَصِفُوْنَ

Our Sustainer is the Merciful whose assistance is sought against all that you ascribe.[1]

The verse "You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help" is of an immensely high rank. Hadrat ʿAllāmah Ibn al-Qayyim *raḥimahullāh* wrote a book on the topic of Sufism in three volumes and gave it the title *Madārij as-Sālikīn Bayna Manāzil Iyyāka Naʿbudu Wa Iyyāka Nastaʿīn* (the levels of the seekers is between *iyyāka naʿbudu wa iyyāka nastaʿīn*). The greatness and comprehensiveness of this verse in Sufism can be gauged from this. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to worship Him alone in the true sense of the word, to make Him our sole objective, and to seek His help alone in all our affairs. Āmīn.

The honourable Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābiʿ Hasanī Sāḥib, the Nāẓim of Dār al-ʿUlūm Nadwatul ʿUlamā' Lucknow, has written some enlightening points on tauḥīd and īmān in his most useful book *Qur'ān Majīd Insānī Zindagī Kā Rehbar-e-Kāmil*. Parts of it are quoted here:

Real tauḥīd is tauḥīd of the heart and soul

The effect of tauḥīd on social life is that the foundation of human society is laid on justice and genuine equality. The fundamental reason for the retrogression and destruction of the present world is that man does not have full conviction in the Oneness of Allāh *taʿālā* with his heart.

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[1] Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 112.

There is no partner in Allāh's will. All wills and desires are subservient to the will and like of Allāh *taʿālā*. No will of any creation in the workings of this universe is a partner with Allāh's will. Real tauḥīd is tauḥīd of the heart and soul. The biggest idol of man is the one which man himself concealed in the temple of his heart. Breaking this idol is the real completion of tauḥīd. It is through tauḥīd that Allāh's fear, Allāh's pleasure and Allāh's love are developed in the heart. Thus, in order to uproot all corrupt thoughts and beliefs, we are ordered to read the following in every rakʿat of every ṣalāh:

اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ

You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help.[1]

Īmān

Belief in tauḥīd is established through the power of īmān and actions come into existent through it. This is what becomes the actual foundation for bringing Islam into practice in the true sense of the word. In Islam, the circle of īmān encompasses belief in the Oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*, belief in all the Prophets up to the seal of Prophets Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, belief in the angels, divine books, the Hereafter and predestination. These have to be accepted with the heart and with full conviction. It is this very īmān which becomes the foundation for all our actions. Without this, there is no other strong foundation for human action. When īmān is born it becomes a light in the heart, and then proves to be the fountainhead for man's lofty life. If

[1] *Qur'ān Majīd Insānī Zindagī Kā Rehbar-e-Kāmil*, p. 258.

there is no īmān, man's entire life wanders aimlessly in an empty space, having no responsibility and no tranquillity.

The purpose of life and the destination is identified through īmān. This entails the birth of man under a formally established purpose. That purpose involves man living his life in Allāh's servitude while fulfilling His orders – all of which are done as a way of gratitude for the life which Allāh *taʿālā* blessed him with and for the many bounties in life which he received. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

I created man and jinn solely for My worship.

This belief has such an effect that if a man firmly embeds in his heart that this entire universe has been created by none other than Allāh *taʿālā*, it results in a focus in his heart. Man then believes that he enjoys the supervision and authority of the Creator and Master of this universe over him, and He has promised to be merciful to His servants. It is through this perception that man bows before Him, worships Him and places his hopes in Him. This then becomes the foundation for man's character and actions. Purpose and effect in actions are only realized when man believes in Allāh *taʿālā* and His Messenger. This is why īmān is the nucleus for all of man's actions and doings.[1]

Since we are discussing the subject of tauḥīd, my heart desires to quote a letter[2] of Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥul

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[1] *Qur'ān Majīd Insānī Zindagī Kā Rehbar-e-Kāmil*, p. 260.

[2] Three letters of Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* which he wrote to Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīmul Ummat Maulānā

Ummat *rahimahullāh* in which he expressed to his shaykh, Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*, his desire to get a glimmer of self-obliteration and tauhīd. The letter reads as follows:

To my mentor, master, chief, *may Allāh perpetuate the shadows of your bestowals over us.*

As-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

Reply: As-salāmu ʿalaykum.

Condition: I am presenting a need from the bottom of my heart with absolute respect and in a beseeching manner to your respected self. Although it is far beyond me, it is not too much for Hadrat's generosity. Hadrat's special temperament is that of fanā and tauhīd. It would be most wonderful and a great treasure if I were to receive just a glimmer of it. I am saying honestly that my heart remains so concerned and worried all the time as if I am searching for a lost item which cannot be found. It is as if I am looking at something and I want to reach it but cannot do so. This is why I am always sad. My heart desires to develop this level of bond with Hadrat.

Reply: Do you even have any doubt about not receiving it!? Everything has certain essential properties, and this is the essential property of this treasure. When it is prudent to do so, you will be informed of it – *inshā Allāh.*

Condition:

Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* are quoted in *Tadhkirah Muslihul Ummat*. The third letter which is appropriate to our discussion is quoted here. (compiler)

> In the presence of your existence, my existence is most astonishing. It is impossible for me to have the power of speech while you are speaking.

I am unable to express everything that is in my heart. I hope Hadrat will console me by pardoning my mistakes.

Was salām
Wasīyyullāh, *may Allāh pardon him.*[1]

Note: Just ponder over how a genuine seeker Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* expressed to his mentor, Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*, his desire to acquire fanā and tauhīd! Then see how Hadrat gave him the glad tidings of its acquisition with full confidence. We who are affiliated to Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* ought to be grateful for being attached to such a perfect monotheist shaykh. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer all His favours and bounties on us. Āmīn. (compiler)

I seek Your pleasure alone

Hadrat Khwājah Naqshband *rahimahullāh* then says in his supplication: "I seek Your pleasure alone."

In other words, O Allāh! You alone are our objective, and Your pleasure and happiness is what we aim for.

The rank of Allāh's pleasure is certainly a very high rank. The one who acquires Allāh's pleasure has acquired everything. The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* had received this treasure by virtue of

[1] Quoted from *Hayāt-e-Muslihul Ummat*.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Allāh *taʿālā* Himself testifies in this regard:

رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوْا عَنْهُ

Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him.

Allāh *taʿālā* says further on:

ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

This awaits he who fears his Sustainer.[1]

In other words, the bounty of Allāh's pleasure is enjoyed by those who have the fear of Allāh *taʿālā*. Obviously, only the one who fears Allāh *taʿālā* will abstain from His disobedience. The one who abstains from His disobedience will be the beloved of Allāh *taʿālā* and in close proximity to Him.

In order to acquire Allāh's pleasure, it is essential for a person to be pleased with Allāh *taʿālā*, he must be pleased with whatever Allāh *taʿālā* has destined and decreed for him, he must be pleased with Allāh's Messenger *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and he must be pleased with the religion which Allāh *taʿālā* is pleased with. A Hadīth states:

من قال حين يسمع المؤذن أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، وأن محمدا عبده ورسوله، رضيت بالله ربًّا، وبمحمد رسولًا، وبالإسلام دينًا، غفر له ذنبه.[2]

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[1] Sūrah al-Bayyinah, 98: 8.

[2] صحيح مسلم:حديث ٨٥.

The person who says the following when he hears the adhān shall have his sins forgiven: I testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh. He is one and He has no partner. I testify that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger. I am pleased with Allāh as my Sustainer, Muḥammad as my Messenger, and Islam as my religion.

The meaning of raḍā

The demand of Allāh's pleasure is for man to follow Allāh's injunctions. In other words, he must carry out what he is ordered to do and abstain what he is prohibited from. This is the meaning of being pleased with the religion of Islam and Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In other words, the rulings of Islam and the Sunnats and instructions of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* must be followed with devotion.

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib Partābgarhī *raḥimahullāh* conveys this in a couplet:

> When a person is prepared to sacrifice himself for Allāh's pleasure, he can conclude that he has acquired Allāh's recognition.

Someone asked a certain pious senior: "How are you?" He replied: "Everything is well." The person asked: "How can everything be well when there are so many calamities and miseries?!" The senior replied: "Brother, listen! Whatever is happening in the world is through the will and pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā*; and we have obliterated our likes for the likes of Allāh *taʿālā*. So it is as though everything is happening according to our likes. How, then, can we say that everything is not well?"

Glory to Allāh! Look at his high level of being pleased with Allāh's will and his belief in Allāh's decree. This is the bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

An explanation of radā

We now quote an explanation of radā from *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn* of Maulānā Qādī Sulaymān Mansūrpūrī which he gave under the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

الرضاء غنيمتي[1]

Allāh's pleasure is my booty.[2]

Amīr al-Mu'minīn Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* wrote to Hadrat Abū Mūsā Ashʿarī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*:

الخير كله في الرضا فإن استطعت أن ترضى وإلا فاصبر.

There is nothing but good in being pleased with Allāh's decree. If you can, then remain on the level of radā, if not, exercise patience.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يٰاَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ اِرْجِعِيْ اِلٰى رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً، فَادْخُلِيْ فِيْ عِبٰدِيْ وَادْخُلِيْ جَنَّتِيْ.

O that self which has acquired tranquillity. Return to your Sustainer – you pleased with Him, He pleased

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[1] الإحياء للعراقي، ج ٥، ص ٨٥. الفوائد المجموعة للشوكاني حديث: ٣٢٦.

[2] This is a part of a lengthy Hadīth which Qādī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* explained with much emotion and feeling. It is worth reading his explanation.

with you. Join, then, My servants and enter My Paradise.[1]

These are the words which will also be said to a believing servant when he departs from this world. It will be said again to him on the field of Resurrection at a time when he will be most happy. To be included among Allāh's beloved servants and reach Paradise are both dependent on the servant being pleased with Allāh and He being pleased with the servant.[2]

There is no bounty superior to Allāh's pleasure

There is no bounty superior to Allāh being pleased with His servant and His servant being pleased with Him. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to make this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ أَرْضِنَا وَارْضَ عَنَّا

O Allāh! Make us pleased and You be pleased with us.

In fact, the true men of Allāh *taʿālā* are attracted to Paradise and its bounties because they are connected to Allāh's pleasure; and they yearn entry into Paradise because it is the place of Allāh's pleasure. They fear entry into Hell because it is the place of Allāh's displeasure.

When a servant acquires the level of raḍā, he enjoys the calamities and difficulties imposed by Allāh *taʿālā* just as he enjoys the bounties and favours which are showered by Him. He spontaneously hymns the following couplet of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh*:

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[1] Sūrah al-Fajr, 89: 27-30.
[2] *Raḥmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, vol. 3, p. 230.

> Whatever tribulation comes from one's friend is certainly not a tribulation; it is His affection.

And his condition becomes like this:

> No "ifs and buts" are ever uttered by the one who is always concerned about Your pleasure.

The station of radā is certainly a very high station. In fact, it is the peak of sulūk. All acts of obedience and spiritual exercises are for its acquisition. The Auliyā' of Allāh *taʿālā* spend all their energies in it and it is to this end that one serves the Auliyā'. Only then can the acquisition of this bounty be a major cause of honour.

A man who was deeply immersed in Allāh's love said:

> O the True Beloved! You stated Your price to be the two worlds. Increase Your price because it is very cheap.

Another lover said:

> It is a cheap bargain to give your life for the bounties of the Hereafter.

Radā is from among the fruits of love

The following is stated in *Tarsīʿ al-Jawāhir al-Makkīyyah*:

منها الرضاء عن الله تعالى في جميع الحالات أي حالة الصحة والمرض والعز والذل والغنى والفقر، فإن الرضاء من ثمرات المحبة، وكل ما يفعل المحبوب محبوب. (ترصيع الجواهر المكية)

From among the feats of the righteous is that they are pleased with Allāh taʿālā in all situations – whether good health and sickness, honour and disgrace, affluence and poverty. This is because radā is from among the fruits of love, and whatever the Beloved does is also beloved.

Look at the comprehensive supplication of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* for the acquisition of radā:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ أَسْئَلُكَ الصِّحَّةَ وَالْعِفَّةَ وَالْأَمَانَةَ وَحُسْنَ الْخُلُقِ وَالرِّضَا بِالْقَدْرِ[1]

O Allāh! I beg You for good health, chastity, trustworthiness, good character and to be pleased with fate and destiny.

This is why the Auliyā' who are the heirs of the external and internal actions and conditions of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* constantly make duʿā' for the acquisition of Allāh's pleasure. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us as well. Āmīn.

Therefore confer me with Your love and recognition

This is the last part of the duʿā'. It means: O Allāh! Confer me with Your love and recognition.

The importance of love

Love refers to the attraction and pull which one experiences towards the beloved. This pull draws the lover to the beloved just as water automatically flows down. Consequently, it becomes easy to obey the beloved. There is a famous saying:

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[1] مجمع الزوائد: ج ١٠، ص ١٧٦.

المحب لمن يحب مطيع

The lover most certainly obeys the beloved.

This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* made duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* for His love. In fact, he even made duʿā' for the things which would be means for His love. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to make this duʿā':

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْاَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُّحِبُّكَ، وَحُبَّ عَمَلٍ يُّقَرِّبُ اِلٰى حُبِّكَ

O Allāh! I ask You for Your love, the love of the person who loves You, and the love of a deed which would draw me closer to Your love.

Allāh *taʿālā* Himself loves His servants. He expresses this in the following way:

فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُّحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّوْنَهُ

Allāh shall soon bring a people whom Allāh loves, and they love Him.[1]

This verse proves Allāh's love for His servants and their love for Him. As for the natural love which a person has for his wife, children, wealth and possessions – to what extent should it be and to what level must his love for Allāh *taʿālā* be? This is clarified in the following verse:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيْرَتُكُمْ
وَأَمْوَالُ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوْهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسٰكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَآ أَحَبَّ

[1] Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 54.

إِلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِيْ سَبِيْلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوْا حَتّٰى يَأْتِيَ اللهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ط وَاللهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ.

Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your family, the wealth which you have acquired, the business whose closure you fear, and the homes which you love are more beloved to you than Allāh and His Messenger and fighting in His path, then wait till Allāh sends His command. Allāh does not guide the disobedient people.[1]

Man's love

The above verse affirms the love which man naturally has for his parents, children, brothers, sisters, family and tribe, trade and profit, homes and orchards, wealth and gold. It states that it is natural for man to love these things. This is then followed by the issue of what is more beloved. If love for these things are subservient to the love for Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then everything is okay. But if, Allāh forbid, the love of these things and persons surpasses the love for Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, then the issue becomes complex and difficult. Allāh *taʿālā* will then promulgate whatever [punishment] He wills. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us from His wrath and punishment. Āmīn.[2]

This is why Allāh *taʿālā* highlights the quality of love which the believers have for Him:

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلّٰهِ

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 24.
[2] *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, p. 206.

Those who are believers are more intense in their love for Allāh [as compared to the unbelievers].[1]

We can understand that just as love for Allāh *taʿālā* must surpass our love for all other creations, in like manner our love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is also essential. Love for our most beloved relatives and our most intensely loving contacts hold no value in comparison to the love which we ought to have for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This is because when obedience does not stem from love, then it is sometimes reduced to a mere custom and formality. This is why obedience to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* has to be coupled with love for him. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* expressed this reality in several ways. For example:

لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى أكون أحب إليه من والده وولده والناس أجمعين[2]

None of you can be a perfect believer until I am more beloved to him than his own self, his parents, his children and all mankind.

It must be borne in mind that the love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which we are discussing must not be mere zealous and fanatical love which a person naturally has for his wife, children and other relatives. Rather, it refers to rational and principled love which a person has on the basis of a certain principle and creed, and which he keeps at the forefront under all conditions. The following Hadīth makes reference to this type of love:

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 165.

[2] صحيح البخاري: رقم ١٥. و صحيح مسلم.

من أحب سنتي فقد أحبني، ومن أحبني كان معي في الجنة.[1]

The one who loves my Sunnat has indeed loved me. And the one who loves me shall be with me in Paradise.

We learn from this that we have to love Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself and his pure Sunnat. This is because obedience without love is a mere custom and hypocrisy; while love without obedience is deviation and innovation. Understand this well.

The effect and fruit of love

Love for Allāh *taʿālā* manifests itself in this world in the sense that it becomes easy for a person to obey the True Beloved. In fact, the one who loves Allāh *taʿālā* experiences joy and delight in carrying out His orders. As the saying goes: Even bitter things taste sweet when it is out of love. This is indeed a great bounty.

The author of *Fatḥ al-Bārī* states that such an amount of love for Allāh *taʿālā* is compulsory through which a person can fulfil His obligations. Similarly, such an amount of love for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is compulsory whereby a person can carry out his essential commands and obligatory rights. What an excellent statement of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* on the virtue and merit of love:

المرء مع من أحب[1]

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[1] سنن الترمذي.

A person shall be with the one whom he loves.

The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* were overjoyed when they heard this statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* because they now had the hope that even if there were any shortcomings in their actions, they would enjoy Rasūlullāh's company in Paradise by virtue of their love for him. After all, there is no greater treasure and bounty than this in both worlds. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with Rasūlullāh's love and honour us with his company in Paradise. Āmīn.

This shows the high status of love for Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It is based on this that the beloved of Allāh – Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* – said:

الحب أساسي[2]

Love is my foundation.

This statement is a part of a lengthy Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which Hadrat Qādī Sulaymān Mansūrpūrī explained in a very emotional manner in his magnum opus, *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*.

Love is the life for the hearts

Love in itself is the food for the hearts and nourishment for the souls. Love alone is the delight of the eyes, life for the hearts, success in this world, love adorns success with the crown of continuity and

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[1] أبو داؤد: ٥١٢٧.

[2] الفوائد المجموعة للشوكاني: حديث ٣٢٦.

eternity, and love alone seats eternity on the throne of progress.[1]

Ten causes for the acquisition of Allāh's love

Since this is the grand status of love, what are the causes for its continuity and progress? We will have to ponder over them and adopt them after having learnt them. We will then have to acquire this greatest of bounties which guarantees success and happiness in this world and in the Hereafter. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

My heart desires to quote the ten causes for the continuity and eternity of Allāh's love as listed by Hadrat Qādī Sulaymān Mansūrpūrī. They are most beneficial and very comprehensive.

1. Recitation of the Qur'ān which includes explanation of its meaning and understanding Allāh's objective.
2. In addition to the compulsory salāhs, to be regular in many optional salāhs.
3. Regular remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* – this includes verbal dhikr and dhikr with the heart. Dhikr through one's conditions and actions are also understood in this.
4. Studying and observing the names and attributes of Allāh *taʿālā* through the heart.
5. Recalling Allāh's external and internal favours, and His material and spiritual bounties.

[1] *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, vol. 3, p. 206.

6. Performing the different acts of worship with absolute respect, full concentration and presence of heart.
7. Total submission of the heart before Allāh *taʿālā*.
8. Giving preference to the injunctions of Allāh *taʿālā* over one's personal desires.
9. Being in the company of Allāh's lovers and the truthful ones.
10. Abhorring those causes which would result in a separation between the servant and Allāh *taʿālā*.

If a person adheres to these points then it is hoped that the fountainhead of love which is placed in man's heart and which was shut on account of unworthy company will gush forth once again, flow with full force and irrigate the sown-fields of hopes. O Allāh! Bless me with Your love and the love of the one who will bring me closer to Your love.[1]

Note: Māshā Allāh! Hadrat Maulānā Qādī Mansūrpūrī explained the same principles and causes for the acquisition of Allāh's love as has been repeatedly explained by the genuine Sufis. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards. Āmīn. (compiler)

He writes towards the end of his explanation of the Hadīth: "Love is my foundation":

The reader must ponder once more over the words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: "Love is my foundation". If the foundation of a building is such a

[1] *Raḥmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, vol. 3, p. 209.

great thing like “love”, what can be said about the rest of the building, and what can be said of the one who resides in that building!! This is the lesson which the one reading the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* ought to remember.[1]

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent piece of advice which ought to be embedded in our hearts. Bearing in mind the above-described status of love, our elders and seniors have been constantly reminding us of its benefits and fruits, encouraging the seekers towards its acquisition, and making duʿā’ for its realization. Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh* wrote the following duʿā’ to a seeker: “May Allāh *taʿālā* confer you with love and recognition. Āmīn.” We too make this duʿā’ to Allāh *taʿālā* to honour us with His love and recognition, and to enable us to enjoy its fruits. Āmīn. (compiler)

The high status of love

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* would constantly speak about the greatness of love and its need.

He used to say: Confidence in one’s shaykh is essential, but the element of love must supersede. This is because when the bond of confidence becomes weak, love is able to maintain the bond. He used to quote this couplet:

> You will find that every structure in this world has a vacuum, but not the structure of love.

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[1] *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, vol. 3, p. 209.

He would say on some occasions: Love does not have to be in the murīd alone, rather, it has to be in the shaykh as well. In fact, it must be more in the shaykh than in the murīd. The shaykh must prove his love through his actions so that his murīd may emulate him in this regard as well.

In like manner, Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib Partābgarhī *raḥimahullāh* who was an embodiment of love – in fact according to Ḥaḍrat Maulānā ʿAbd al-Ghanī Ṣāḥib Phūlpūrī *raḥimahullāh* he was solely and only love – used to constantly write prose and poetry on the greatness and importance of love. He would also encourage it with his actions and conditions.

Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* writes the following on the subject of love in his well-known book *Maḍmūn Dhikr*:

Where Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Rūm *raḥimahullāh* and other luminaries speak about love, then what it means is that the shaykh must speak so much about the virtues of love that a person develops a perfect desire and interest in its acquisition, so that through its blessings, he is blessed with eternal life and spirituality.

Bearing in mind that it is love which connects the lover to the Beloved, the Sufis of every era have been encouraging towards it in their speeches and writings. Maulānā Rūm *raḥimahullāh* writes in his *Mathnawī*:

> May you be happy O love because it is through you that thoughts remain in line, and all illnesses are treated through you.

He says further on:

> It is through you that pride and haughtiness are repulsed. Therefore, you alone are my Plato[1] and my Galen[2].[3]

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the head teacher at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband, writes in one of his letters:

> This is the essence of love, i.e. to be completely obliterated before the beloved and to lose all desires. If not, the love is defective because in such a case the beloved will be part of the desires and not the actual beloved.

Hadrat Shiblī *rahimahullāh* states:

> What does an ʿārif have to do with relationships? What complaint does the relationship of love have? What claim can a servant ever make?[4]

Since the lover obliterates himself in the beloved, the likes of the beloved becomes his likes. Then whatever he experiences from the beloved is considered to be in line with his likes. How, then, can there ever be any complaint? It is as though the lover is saying through his actions: Whatever I experience on account of my beloved is acceptable.

We make duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* to engulf us in His love and in the love of His beloved, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and may He inspire us to obey

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[1] A Greek philosopher.
[2] A Greek physician.
[3] *Ta'līfāt Muslihul Ummat*, vol. 3, p. 33.
[4] *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, vol. 3, p. 189.

Him and His Messenger *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* completely. Āmīn.

Hajj – a manifestation of love

The honourable Dr. Ashraf ad-Dīn is from among the khulafā' of Sufi Iqbāl Ahmad Sāhib. He wrote a book on the subject of hajj. He writes:

The second most important point is that hajj is a manifestation of love. This entire journey reminds a person of love. Love is displayed and encouraged at every step of the way. One's clothing can be cast aside for the sake of the Beloved, one's house and family can be left behind for the sake of the Beloved, walking around His House, kissing its walls, running for His sake, moving around in search of Him, spending one's wealth and life for Him, crying and weeping in His remembrance, beseeching and begging Him, considering His enemy to be one's own enemy and pelting that enemy repeatedly. Moreover, to spend the morning in one place for the sake of the Beloved, the evening in another place, the day in one place and the night in another place, and to carry out His orders at every place, and so on…

These are all the manifestations of love the essence of which is that man must make himself into a true lover. In other words, all his life's works must be in accordance with the pleasure of the True Beloved, and in line with the ways and mannerisms of His beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He must obliterate himself all the time in His remembrance even if he has to spend his comforts, luxuries, honour and authority, and life and wealth for the realization of this objective. Even if his carnal self, Shaytān, his environment and other external factors become his enemies – he must give preference

to the pleasure of the True Beloved over everything else.

Love is the soul of ḥajj

Love is a feeling which is beyond description. It is expressed through words and actions. The actions of love also become the causes and the means for increase in love if they are coupled with the spirit of love and veneration, and bring comfort and pleasure to the beloved. On the other hand, painful actions and those which result in the beloved's disapproval are considered to be disrespectful and impudent. They are never out of love; they are solely formalities. Love without obedience to the beloved is not valid. And obedience without love is a body without a soul. As regards injunctions, it is not possible to effect this bond with the internal and external without having the love of the spiritual masters and purifying one's self under their supervision. The very meaning of true love entails perfect and cautious obedience. The lover is obedient to his beloved. If not, his love merely stems from carnal emotions; it is not love based on īmān.

The first level of one's bond with the beloved is for a person to experience joy at taking the beloved's name. The second level is that he does not forget to remember his beloved. The third level is that everything which is associated to the beloved is also beloved to the lover. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that the ṭawāf of the Kaʿbah, the saʿīy between Ṣafā and Marwah and the pelting of the Jamarāt are solely for Allāh's remembrance.[1]

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[1] Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī.

In a discussion about His Messengers, Allāh *taʿālā* highlights their love, devotion and self-obliteration. He says with reference to Hadrat Yahyā *ʿalayhis salām*:

وَاٰتَيْنٰهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا وَّحَنَانًا مِّنْ لَّدُنَّا وَزَكٰوةً ؕ وَكَانَ تَقِيًّا.

We gave him wisdom while still a child. We gave him eagerness from Our side and purity. And he was righteous.[1]

The entire story of Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* is a manifestation of this same theme. Look at how he passed a knife across the neck of his beloved son. Allāh *taʿālā* says in praise of him:

اِنَّ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ لَحَلِيْمٌ اَوَّاهٌ مُّنِيْبٌ

Ibrāhīm is certainly forbearing, soft-hearted, constantly turning [to Allāh].[2]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is the beloved of Allāh *taʿālā*. He said about himself: I am Allāh's beloved. The other side of this love was that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had the most love for Allāh *taʿālā*. He said in a Hadīth:

إن أتقاكم وأعلمكم بالله أنا

I am the most fearful and most knowledgeable of you with regard to Allāh.[3]

It is through the knowledge of attributes that love develops.

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[1] Sūrah Maryam, 19: 12-13.
[2] Sūrah Hūd, 11: 75.
[3] Bukhārī.

This is the reason behind the Qur'ān being replete with the attributes and actions of Allāh *taʿālā*, His favours which are mentioned repeatedly and with so much detail. After all, attributes and qualities are the fountainheads of love and yearning.[1]

Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāḥib *raḥimahullāh* says: Love alone is that element which, when it is embedded in the heart, causes the beloved to supersede everything else. In the presence of love, neither is esteem and shame, nor honour and nobility of any significance. If this is not the case, it cannot be referred to as true love. A lover obliterates his feelings in the obedience of the beloved, and becomes totally obedient to the beloved. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* said:

قُلْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ

Say [O Muḥammad]! If you love Allāh then obey me, Allāh will love you.

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتّٰى يَكُوْنَ هَوَاهُ تَبْعًا لِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ

You cannot be a perfect believer unless your desires become subservient to what I have come with.

The actions of ḥajj enable a person to practise the quality of iḥsān (to worship Allāh *taʿālā* as though one can see Him). This is in the sense that perfect love coupled with perfect actions are carried out as though one is doing them in the very presence of Allāh *taʿālā*.

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[1] Maulānā Abul Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadwī: *Arkān-e-Arbaʿah*, p. 295.

Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* is the founder of this love and Allāh *taʿālā* conveyed it to us through Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. If Allāh *taʿālā* confers us with His love and the love of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* through His grace and kindness, and through the intercession of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, there will be joy in every act of obedience and comfort in every misery.[1]

The manner of acquiring love

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself made duʿā' for the acquisition of love. There can be no better means for its acquisition. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to beg Him for it. Observe the following emotional supplication of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْاَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُّحِبُّكَ، وَحُبَّ عَمَلٍ يُّقَرِّبُ اِلٰى حُبِّكَ[2]

O Allāh! I ask You for Your love, the love of the person who loves You, and the love of a deed which would draw me closer to Your love.

In addition to teaching us a duʿā', Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* taught us a rational and practical manner of acquiring this love. The following statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* can be presented as a proof:

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[1] *ʿAbdīyyat Kāmilah Aur ʿIshq Wa Mahabbat Ka Mazhar Hajj.*

[2] سنن الترمذي: حديث ٣٤٣٥.

أحبوا الله لما يغذوكم من نعمه، وأحبوني بحب الله، وأحبوا أهل بيتي بحبي.[1]

Love Allāh because of the many favours which He showers on you. Love me because Allāh loves me. Love my family members because I love them.

The great Ḥadīth scholar, Ḥadrat Maulānā Badr ʿĀlam Ṣāḥib Muhājir Madanī *raḥimahullāh* writes in *Tarjumān as-Sunnah* that this Ḥadīth shows the easiest way to acquire Allāh's love. First ponder over the bounties and favours which you are experiencing by night and day without striving for them and without being eligible for them. This will create love for Allāh *taʿālā* within you.[2] Once love for Allāh *taʿālā* is created in your heart, the development of love for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is inevitable because this is the essential relationship which he has with Allāh *taʿālā*, i.e. he conveys the message of Allāh *taʿālā* to you.

If a person claims love for Allāh *taʿālā* but does not respect and love Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* completely, or he beats the drum of love for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* while his heart is devoid of any love and veneration for Allāh *taʿālā*, then such a person is in total deception.

Love and respect for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is the first obligation. This is because he is

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[1] سنن الترمذي: ج ٢، ص ٢١٩.

[2] This is known as rational love. Another is natural love. Although this is not within one's control, when a person follows the causes of rational love, Allāh *taʿālā* – through His grace – confers the person with natural love as well. (Qamar az-Zamān)

the Messenger of that great Being who is the Creator of the entire universe.

If the circle of this relationship is extended slightly, then the children of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* will be included. Love for them is essential because love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is essential. In other words, if we want to develop love for them, we will have to place the grand status of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* before us. This will result in an automatic love for his children. The relationship which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* has with his family extends to that group (the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*) among whom Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* spent his night and day, who sacrificed their lives for him, and did not hesitate in the least to sever all ties for his companionship. Thus, if any person harbours any hatred or malice towards this devoted group (as is the striking feature of the Shīʿah), can you ever refer to him as a lover of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*?! May Allāh *taʿālā* save us from excesses and inspire us towards genuine and true love. Āmīn.[1]

Love for Rasūlullāh's internal Sunnats is also essential

We learn from this that just as love for Allāh *taʿālā* is essential, so is it for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In fact, just as it is necessary for every Muslim to love Rasūlullāh's external Sunnats, he has to love his internal Sunnats as well. It is necessary to follow the internal Sunnats just as it is for the external Sunnats. We see Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu*

[1] *Tarjumān as-Sunnah*, vol. 1, p. 352.

ʿ*alayhi wa sallam* giving the glad tiding of his companionship in Paradise for the one who practises on one of his internal Sunnats:

عن أنس قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يا بني إن قدرت أن تصبح وتمسي وليس في قلبك غش لأحد فافعل، ثم قال يا بني وذلك من سنتي، ومن أحب سنتي فقد أحبني، ومن أحبني كان معي في الجنة.[1]

Hadrat Anas radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "O my son! If you can spend the morning and evening without having any malice towards anyone in your heart, you must certainly do it." Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam then said: "O my son! This is my Sunnat. Whoever loves my Sunnat has loved me, and whoever loves me shall be with me in Paradise."

In this Hadīth Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* makes mention of one of his internal Sunnats (i.e. not having malice towards anyone), encourages us to make it beloved, and gives us the glad tiding of Paradise for it. This can only happen if a person's heart is filled with Rasūlullāh's love. In other words, without it, a person cannot follow Rasūlullāh's internal Sunnats. This is why Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* who was a true adherent of the internal Sunnats says in a couplet:

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[1] أخرجه الترمذي في العلم، باب الأخذ بالسنة، ج ٢، ص ٩٦. وقال الترمذي هذا حديث حسن غريب من هذا الوجه.

My heart is the temple and abode of the beloved. This is why it has no place for hatred and malice towards anyone.

Hadrat Maulānā Badr ʿĀlam Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes as follows in his commentary to the above Hadīth:

In the Arabic language, the word *gish* is the opposite of *nus-h* which means "desiring good" or "showing concern for the welfare of others". On the other hand, *gish* includes malice, hatred, enmity and so on. Having a clear and clean heart is a part and parcel of prophet-hood, and is greatly emphasised by the Sharīʿat. In this Hadīth, a clear sign of love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is shown to us, viz. to love all of Rasūlullāh's ways and mannerisms. Worshipping Allāh *taʿālā* is compulsory on every person, and every Muslim considers it his duty to follow him. However, this Hadīth teaches us a higher criterion, viz. apart from acts of worship, Rasūlullāh's habits, ways and mannerisms must also be considered to be worthy of emulation. In fact, those unintentional emotions which are embedded in a person's heart towards one's enemy must not be allowed to remain in it because they are against the ways of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This can only happen when love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* permeates every vein in the body.

Being with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in Paradise does not mean that we will be at exactly the same rank and position as him. Rather, it means that it will be easy to visit him and meet him. The whole of Paradise is like a house where all its residents are considered to be living in one place. The effect of the bond of love in Paradise will be that each person will be as close to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu*

ʿ*alayhi wa sallam* according to the level of his bond of love with him.[1]

In his explanation of this Hadīth, Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say that not having malice is an internal action. Despite this, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* referred to it as his Sunnat. We learn from this that just as Sunnat refers to external actions – such as offering salām, shaking hands, visiting the sick, helping people, etc. – it refers to internal actions as well, e.g. not having malice, jealousy, pride and so on. A person will thus be rewarded for practising on both types of Sunnats, and – Allāh willing - it will be a cause of entry into Paradise.

Note: We make duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* to enable us to practise on all the internal and external Sunnats, and to make us His beloveds through the blessings of this. Āmīn. (compiler)

The amount of wealth is the scale of love

The level of a person's love for another can be gauged from the amount of wealth he spends on his beloved. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to repeatedly quote the following text of Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* in his assemblies. It is titled *Maqādīr al-Amwāl Mawāzīn al-Mahabbah* – the amount of wealth which a lover spends on his beloved is an indication of the level of love he has for his beloved. We are quoting this text of Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* so that the nature of this subject is further clarified.

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[1] *Tarjumān as-Sunnah*, vol. 1, p. 356.

Sometimes certain enjoyments have to be given up for the sake of the beloved. However, the self cannot tolerate giving up some of them. For example, wealth is a beloved thing. There are times when a person gives half, one third or one tenth of his wealth to his beloved. But if he is asked to give all his wealth, he is not prepared to do it. These amounts of wealth are in fact the scales of love. The increase and decrease of these amounts can be used as scales to determine the increase and decrease in love. If a person's heart is fully encompassed with love for his beloved, he will sacrifice everything for the beloved – his wealth and even a valuable thing like his life. He does not save anything for himself.

For example, Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* had given over his daughter to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in marriage, and also presented all his wealth and placed it before him. Ḥaḍrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that on one occasion Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was seated and Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was with him, when Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* descended and conveyed Allāh's salām to him. At the time, Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* was wearing a shawl whose two sides were draped over his chest and tied with thorns [as buttons]. Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* said: "What is this I'm seeing – that Abū Bakr is wearing a shawl with its two

sides attached with thorns!?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "He spent all his wealth on me before the Conquest of Makkah." Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* said: "O Rasūlullāh! Convey salām to Abū Bakr from Allāh *taʿālā* and tell him that Allāh *taʿālā* asks: 'Are you happy with this poor condition of yours or are you unhappy?'" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* repeated the words of Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* to Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. When he heard this message, he began crying and said: "Why should I be unhappy with my Allāh? I am happy with Him in every condition and situation." We learn from this that anyone who loves a scholar or worshipper, or one who is interested in knowledge or worship; he loves him for Allāh's pleasure and for the sake of Allāh *taʿālā*. And he shall receive a reward which is reciprocal to the strength of his love. Anyway, this is an explanation of the levels of love for Allāh's sake. From this, hatred or dislike for Allāh's sake is also gauged. Nevertheless, we will discuss this further.[1]

Note: As for those who beat the drum of love but are not prepared to spend the smallest of amounts on the beloved, they are mere slaves of their passions. It is said with reference to them:

وجائزة دعوى المحبة في الهوى – ولكن لا يخفى كلام المنافق

[1] *Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*, vol. 2, p. 166.

It is possible to make claims of love in carnal desires, but the speech of a hypocrite cannot remain hidden.

In other words, his claims are exposed when he is put to the test.

A test of sincerity

There are times when the Sufi masters test the sincerity of their disciples by asking them to spend their wealth. Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* used to relate to us the story of a sincere person from *Risālah Qushayrīyyah*.

Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Raudhbārī *raḥimahullāh* had joined a group of Auliyā' for a meal to which they were invited. As they were proceeding, a person who met them on the way began uttering abuses at them. He also said: "People say that these people even consider unlawful things to be lawful." He continued speaking in this vein and said: "There is a person from among them who took a loan of 100 dirhams from me and hasn't paid me as yet. I do not know how to get it from him."

When these seniors eventually reached the house where they were invited, Hadrat Abū ʿAbdillāh Raudhbārī *raḥimahullāh* said to the host (who had great love for this group of Auliyā'): "If you would like the tranquillity of my heart then give me 100 dirhams." The host presented the amount immediately. Hadrat Raudhbārī *raḥimahullāh* then gave the money to one of his companions and said to him: "Go and give this amount to such and such greengrocer, and say to him: 'These are the 100 dirhams which one of our companions had taken as a loan from you. He was experiencing certain problems which caused a delay in the repayment. He

has sent the money now so kindly accept his apology.'" The person went to the greengrocer and did as he was advised by Hadrat Raudhbārī *rahimahullāh*. After completing their meal, these Auliyā' departed and passed by the shop of the greengrocer. On seeing them, he began praising them and said: "These people are the only reliable ones, they are most trustworthy and they are very righteous." He said other words of praise about them.[1]

Note: We learn from this incident that the 'ulamā' and Sufis must pay particular attention to clarity and transparency in their transactions and dealings so that the 'ulamā' and Sufi fraternities are not maligned. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say that it becomes clear from this incident that if a shaykh or teacher in convinced about the sincerity and devotion of a murīd or student, he may express his needs to him. (compiler)

We now come to the last part of the du'ā' which we are explaining.

> O my Allāh! You alone are my objective. I seek Your pleasure alone. Therefore confer me with Your love and recognition.

And recognition

In other words, O Allāh! Together with Your love, confer me with Your recognition (ma'rifat). The reason for this is that mere love without recognition sometimes causes a person to go astray from the path. The person does not apply the external rules of the Sharī'at and makes love his sole objective. And

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[1] *Ar-Risālah al-Qushayrīyyah Fī 'Ilm at-Tasawwuf*, p. 71.

this is certainly not acceptable. This is why love has to be coupled with recognition. In this way the person can remain on the straight path and abstain from exceeding the bounds of moderation. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

المعرفة رأس مالي

Recognition is my capital wealth.

The greatness of recognition

Hadrat Qādī Sulaymān Mansūrpūrī *rahimahullāh* provides an excellent explanation of recognition in his book *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*. A few quotations are presented here:

The word maʿrifat linguistically refers to recognition or identification. In the definition of the Sufi masters, it is used to refer to the beginning and the end. It should be clear that the beginning of maʿrifat commences with the recognition of the person himself. Fortunate indeed is the person whose maturity begins with a recognition of his faults. It is this self-recognition which is the stepping stone to Allāh-recognition, which is the end or peak of maʿrifat. The fact of the matter is that maʿrifat creates awe, and awe contains affinity and kinship within itself. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

أنا أعرفكم بالله وأشدكم له خشية

I have the most recognition of Allāh from among you, and have the most fear for Him.[1]

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[1] *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, vol. 3, p. 202.

Like love, fear is the fruit of recognition. It should be borne in mind that recognition is that special light which is placed in a believer's chest through which he can understand divine attributes, and utilize proofs and evidences.

Recognition has a special position in Dīn. Once the authority of recognition takes control of the heart, the servant – with all his capabilities and efforts – devotes himself to seeking Allāh *taʿālā*. His heart finds peace and tranquillity only in the obedience of his Lord. In fact, it becomes the food for his heart. Thus, whatever he sees, hears, thinks and does – everything is under the order and permission of Allāh *taʿālā*, and in accordance with the order of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He does not transgress the limit of the Sharīʿat and is safe from excesses and shortcomings. He proves to be a genuine member of the أمة وسطا in the true sense of the word.

The total and absolute recognition of Allāh *taʿālā* is from among the impossibilities. This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

ما عرفناك حق معرفتك

We have not recognized You as You ought to be recognized.

Allāh *taʿālā* Himself says:

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهٖ

They did not recognize Allāh fully.[1]

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[1] Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 91.

Nonetheless, no matter how much is possible in this world, we have to strive for it and supplicate to Allāh *taʿālā* for it. After all, Allāh *taʿālā* instructed Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to seek this knowledge and recognition:

قُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِيْ عِلْمًا

Say: O my Sustainer! Increase me in knowledge.

The fruit of this additional knowledge and recognition is that the servant acquires the rank of ihsān – Allāh consciousness on account of which he is bashful before Allāh *taʿālā* and is fully convinced that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching him from a place which he cannot see. This is why he will be respectful to Allāh *taʿālā*, will abhor disobeying Him and has fear for Him.

Just ponder over this high status and rank of recognition for whose acquisition the Naqshbandī masters are teaching us a special duʿā'. The more a person progresses in his recognition, the stronger his level of ihsān will be. (compiler)

An explanation of recognition

We now quote a few points from *Sahā'if Maʿrifat* of Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Razzāq Jhanjhānwī *rahimahullāh* on the subject of recognition. Allāh willing, these will prove to be most beneficial, effective and enlightening for us. He writes:

The fact of the matter is that the very reason for the creation of jinn and man is worship. The Qur'ān states:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

I created jinn and man solely for My worship.[1]

Two types of recognition

(1) Evidential. (2) Emotional. The first type refers to a servant looking at the various effects and traces in the heavens and the earth, and he ponders and reflects over the things of the heavens and the earth. After observing and looking at them, he comes to the conclusion that all these things have a Creator and Wise Manufacturer who created them by His will, wisdom and mastery. By observing Allāh's perfect manufacturing, the servant recognizes Allāh *taʿālā*. This type of recognition is essential, there is no escape from it, and īmān cannot be acquired without it. nonetheless, this type of recognition is for the masses.

Emotional recognition means that the ʿārif (the one who recognizes Allāh *taʿālā*) obliterates all feelings of his existence. He goes beyond the materialist view of life and this universe and acquires the true recognition of that truly existent Being. In order for him to realize this, he has to strive against his carnal self, engage in continuous spiritual exercises, give up his desires and contacts, engage in excessive dhikr with his heart and tongue, and obtain the spiritual attention of his shaykh. This journey cannot be traversed without all these elements. It is through the help of these means that man can traverse the path of Sufism and the levels of self-obliteration, and eventually reach the station of eternity; after which he acquires the recognition of Allāh's names and attributes and recognizes the truth with the truth. After reaching this level of recognition and station of

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[1] Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 56.

eternity, he turns his attention to the creation and fulfils his duties as an heir of the Messenger *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Emotional recognition is the opposite of the evidential recognition of the masses because the masses recognize Allāh *taʿālā* through His actions and doings, while the recognition of the ʿārif is through the truth itself. There is a major difference between the two. A poet says:

> How immature is that person who is out in the desert searching for the sunlight with the assistance of a candlelight!?

A similar meaning is conveyed by Ibn al-Fārsī *rahimahullāh* in the following couplet:

كذلك يفعل بي عارف جاهل – وعارف بي عارف بالحقيقة

An ignorant ʿārif recognizes Me through My actions, while a genuine ʿārif acquires My recognition through Me.

The need for an erudite mentor

To sum up, emotional recognition cannot be acquired without spiritual exertion, striving, spiritual training and the supervision of an expert mentor. If you want to tread this path, it is essential for you to search for that genuine man of Allāh *taʿālā* and expert mentor who has already trod this path, seen its ups and downs, felt its heat and cold, bore the pain of separation and reached the rank of proximity and unity [with Allāh *taʿālā*]. This is so that through dhikr and contemplation, the dirt and grime of all apart from Allāh *taʿālā* may be removed from the

mirror of your heart, and you are able to see Allāh's being and attributes clearly.[1]

The word ʿibādat is explained as maʿrifat

Hadrat Sayyidunā Muhīy ad-Dīn ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlānī *rahimahullāh* provides a very emotional explanation in his *Tafsīr al-Jīlānī*:

(وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ) ويعرفوني، ويتحققوا بوحدتي واستقلالي في وجودي وفي عموم تصرفاتي، وباستحقاقي للإطاعة والعبودية مطلقا بلا شوب شركة ومظاهرة من أحد.[2]

(I have created jinn and mankind solely for My worship) and so that they acquire My recognition. They must acknowledge Me alone through My oneness, independence in My existence, all-encompassing doings, eligibility for absolute obedience and worship without the slightest inkling of any partner and help from anyone.

However, it is essential to know that recognition is the soul of worship. Worship is meaningless in the absence of Allāh-recognition. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوْنِيْ

I am your Lord, so worship Me.

In other words, I am your Lord so acquire the recognition of My divinity and worship Me. Recognition of Allāh *taʿālā* is therefore the most important and greatest of all things.

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[1] *Sahā'if Ma'rifat*, pp. 80-82.

[2] تفسير الجيلاني: ج ٥، ص ٦١.

Recognition of Rasūlullāh is also essential

Just as love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is necessary, so is his recognition. After all, only if a person truly recognizes Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* will he have confidence in him, respect him, abstain from excesses and shortcomings in fulfilling his rights, and develop a balance with regard to him. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* expresses this in the following couplet:

> Now there is neither any excess nor any shortcoming. Love is now complete and balanced.

In fact, the balance which comes from perfection in love is actually acquired through knowledge and recognition. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

> The one from whose sight the rank of messenger-ship is hidden can never obtain the goblet of tauhīd.

Recognition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* means that a person must believe with full conviction that Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is the true Messenger of Allāh *taʿālā*, and he is the truthful and trustworthy one. There is deep wisdom in every word and action of his even though we may not understand its wisdom.

We have to develop the knowledge of certainty that the path shown to us by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is the only path of salvation and success, and it is the path which will convey us right until the day of Resurrection. Neither will any new Book be revealed nor any new Messenger sent.

Another form of recognition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is that we must believe that the ways which he taught us for acquiring Allāh's love and recognition are the only correct ways. To follow any other way is misguidance and ignorance.

Recognition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* also entails believing that he was commissioned so that he is obeyed, as stated by Allāh *taʿālā*:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوا الرَّسُوْلَ وَلَا تُبْطِلُوْا اَعْمَالَكُمْ

O believers! Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and do not let your deeds go to vain.[1]

مَنْ يُّطِعِ الرَّسُوْلَ فَقَدْ اَطَاعَ اللّٰهَ

Whoever obeys the Messenger has in fact obeyed Allāh.[2]

Allāh *taʿālā* goes into details in the Qur'ān in enabling us to recognize Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This is especially so with regard to obeying him and being obedient to him. It is the duty of every follower of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to bear this in mind. The reality of this is clarified in the following couplet:

أيها المبعوث فينا جئت بالأمر المطاع

O you who have been sent and commissioned to us! You have come with an order which has to be obeyed.

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[1] Sūrah Muḥammad, 47: 33.
[2] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 80.

The recognition of the auliyā'

Remember that just as Allāh *taʿālā* enabled us to recognize Allāh *taʿālā*, so did He with regard to the auliyā'. Allāh *taʿālā* did not leave it to us to consider anyone we like to be a walī and reject whomever we want. We cannot decide this on our own accord. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

أَلاَ إِنَّ أَوْلِيَآءَ اللهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ، اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَكَانُوْا يَتَّقُوْنَ.

Remember! Those who are the friends of Allāh – neither is there fear on them nor will they grieve. Those who believed and continued fearing.[1]

In other words, proximity to Allāh *taʿālā* and close friendship with Him can be acquired through īmān and piety. In other words, wilāyat (friendship with Allāh *taʿālā*) is dependent on īmān and piety. All sections of the Muslim nation – the masses and the elite – have to bear this in mind. If not, there will be no delay in the onset of deviation and misguidance. In fact, it has already set in. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

The signs and identity of the auliyā'

Tafsīr Maẓharī quotes a Ḥadīth Qudsī in which Allāh *taʿālā* states: My auliyā' from among My servants are those who are remembered when I am remembered, and I am remembered when they are remembered.

Ibn Mājah contains a narration of Ḥaḍrat Asmā' bint Yazīd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* who states that Rasūlullāh

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[1] Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 62-63.

ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said that a sign of the auliyā' of Allāh *taʿālā* is:

الذين إذا رأوا ذكر الله

When you see them, Allāh is remembered.

In short, when a person sits in the company of a person by whom he is inspired to engage in Allāh's remembrance and he experiences a lessening of worldly worries and concerns, then it is a sign that he is a walī.

Tafsīr Maẓharī states that the signs of a walī as believed by the masses – i.e. he must be able to perform supernatural feats, inform about the unseen and so on – are all wrong and deceptions. There are thousands of auliyā' who did not perform a single of these things. On the other hand, we hear of people performing such things whose īmān too is not correct.[1]

The method of acquiring wilāyat

The company of the auliyā' is essential for the acquisition of wilāyat. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

يٰأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ

O believers! Continually fear Allāh and remain with the truthful.[2]

In other words, by remaining in their company you will develop the qualities of truthfulness, purity and

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[1] *Maʿāriful Qur'ān*, vol. 4, p. 550.
[2] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 119.

piety. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* has made the company of righteous people obligatory.

It is a logical and common sense point that just as the company of experts in worldly excellences is necessary in order to acquire proficiency in a particular worldly field, and to remain focused with them; in like manner the acquisition of love, recognition, piety and other similar qualities can only be acquired through the company of those who themselves have such qualities. Ḥaḏrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī *raḥimahullāh* writes: The fifth condition for a genuine and erudite spiritual mentor is that he must have remained in the company of an erudite spiritual mentor who accepts bayʿat, learnt etiquette from him, acquired internal light and tranquillity from him over a long period of time. The prerequisite of companionship of a spiritual master has been laid down because it has always been the norm of Allāh *taʿālā* that an objective cannot be reached without first looking at those who have reached the objective. Just as a person cannot acquire knowledge without the company of knowledgeable people, the same can be said of learning the art of ironmongery or carpentry.[1]

It is therefore essential for defective people like us to hold on to genuine men of Allāh *taʿālā* who are also people of love and recognition in whose company we can traverse the path to Allāh *taʿālā* so that we can reach the court of love easily and without any danger. Ḥaḏrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* conveys this message in very simple words in the following couplet:

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[1] *Taʾlīfāt Muṣliḥul Ummat*, vol. 1, p. 15. *Shifāʾ al-ʿAlīl*, p. 21.

> One cannot walk the path to love on his own. I am walking that path, come walk with me.

Mukarram Sayyid Tufayl Ahmad Madanī Sāhib conveys a similar message in the following couplet:

> A person may reach his destination after following the footsteps left behind by another, but the blessed companionship of a caravan of travellers is something else!

An important supplication

The following is an important supplication of a true lover of Allāh *taʿālā*:

اَللّٰهُمَّ طَهِّرْ قَلْبِيْ مِنْ غَيْرِكَ، وَنَوِّرْ قَلْبِيْ بِنُوْرِ مَعْرِفَتِكَ

O Allāh! Purify my heart of all apart from You, and illuminate my heart through the light of Your recognition.

The above duʿā' should also be included in one's daily devotions. Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had advised Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Siddīq Sāhib *rahimahullāh* to make this duʿā'. The essence of this duʿā' is the kalimah tayyibah itself. In other words, as long as the heart is not purified of all besides Allāh through the dhikr of Lā Ilāha, it is not possible to enter the edifice of Illallāh. Hadrat Khwājah Muhammad Maʿsūm Sirhindī *rahimahullāh* repeatedly quotes the following couplet in his letters:

> As long as you do not clean your heart with the broom of "Lā", you will not be able to enter the palace of "Illallāh".

Hadrat Mujaddid's advice to his sons

Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* wrote a letter from prison to his sons Khwājah Muhammad Saʿīd *rahimahullāh* and Khwājah Muhammad Maʿsūm *rahimahullāh* in which he instructed them to make a habit of repeating the kalimah tayyibah. He also ordered them not to make efforts to obtain his release from prison. He gave them a few other pieces of advice as well. The letter reads as follows:

My dear sons! Although a tribulation is very bitter and unpalatable, it can be a great boon. Now that you have the opportunity, remain occupied in your work while expressing your gratitude to Allāh *taʿālā*. Do not waste a single moment of opportunity. There are three points: (1) reciting the Qur'ān, (2) performing salāh with lengthy recitations of the Qur'ān, (3) repeating the kalimah tayyibah – Lā Ilāha Illallāh. Any one of these three must always be done. When you say "Lā" then reject all gods and repulse your wants because asking for your wants is also a claim to your godhood.

Apart from the time of tribulation, your wants and desires come as obstacles. May Allāh keep you well. Whether we meet again or not, my advice to you is that you must have no want or greed. No matter what happens, it is through Allāh's pleasure and His will. In fact, even my release which has become a major concern of yours should not become an objective. You must be fully pleased with the decree of Allāh *taʿālā* and His will. Explain this entire theme clearly to your mother as well.

The remaining conditions of this life are not worthy of being noted because they are bound to end. Be affectionate towards your juniors and continue encouraging them to study. As far as possible, keep

those who have rights over us happy. Worries about a dwelling, well, orchard and books are most insignificant. They would have still gone if we died. Now that they are gone while we are alive, there is nothing to worry about. The auliyā' of Allāh *taʿālā* used to give up these things of their own will. Be grateful that Allāh *taʿālā* released these things from us through His will.

No matter where you are, consider that to be your home. No matter where this few day's life is spent must be spent in Allāh's remembrance. The affairs of this world are easy, focus more on the Hereafter. Constantly console your mother and encourage her towards the Hereafter. If Allāh *taʿālā* wills, we will all meet. If not, be happy with Allāh's decree and make duʿā' that we are all assembled together in one place in Dār as-Salām (Paradise), and that Allāh *taʿālā* – through His kindness - enables us to meet in the Hereafter as a compensation for our separation in this world. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* in every situation and condition.[1]

Repeating the words "The truth has arrived and falsehood vanished"

Hadrat ʿUbaydullāh who is knows as Khwājah Khurd ibn Khwājah Bāqī Billāh *rahimahullāh* (d. 1074 A.H.) says:

Allāh *taʿālā* opened the reality of this verse to me:

جَآءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ ط إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوْقًا

[1] *Tajalliyāt Rabbānī*, vol. 2, p. 96.

The truth has arrived and falsehood vanished. Falsehood [by nature] vanishes.[1]

He adds: A seeker must read this verse with his heart or tongue, or with both. When he says: *Jā'al haq*, he must incline his head towards his heart, and when he says: *zahaqal bāṭil*, he must fling bāṭil (falsehood) behind him.

He also said: It is hoped that the seeker will experience much expansion through this practice. In other words, he will acquire the condition and feeling of tauhīd by the will of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: It would be good for the seekers to include this practice together with the dhikr of kalimah ṭayyibah. Allāh willing, it will prove to be effective and beneficial. (compiler)

The spiritual condition of a person cannot be decided through kashf and ilhām

In the above-quoted duʿā', viz.

اَللّٰهُمَّ طَهِّرْ قَلْبِيْ مِنْ غَيْرِكَ، وَنَوِّرْ قَلْبِيْ بِنُوْرِ مَعْرِفَتِكَ

O Allāh! Purify my heart of all apart from You, and illuminate my heart through the light of Your recognition.

A supplication is made for the illumination of one's heart through the light of recognition. The acquisition of this bounty – light of recognition – is certainly a praiseworthy condition. Nonetheless, a decision on a person's internal and spiritual condition cannot be passed through it. Some people claim: "We have acquired such effulgence and power

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[1] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 81.

of exposition that we can gauge the internal condition of some people, and we can treat a person according to that internal condition." Understand well that this is totally wrong. A person's internal condition cannot be decided in this way because to pass a decision, a clear guidance from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth is necessary. Without this, we cannot pass a decision on a person's internal condition merely on the basis of kashf and ilhām – exposition and inspiration. The pure Sharīʿat has laid down the Sharīʿat itself as the criterion by which an absolute decision on a person's internal condition can be passed. This has been explained by Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* in his *Irtifāʿ aḍ-Ḍīq*. Ḥaḍrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUqbah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* heard Amīr al-Muʾminīn Ḥaḍrat ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* saying:

A person's internal condition is decided through his external actions

أن عبد الله بن عقبة قال سمعت عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه يقول: إن أناسا كانوا يوخذون بالوحي في عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، وإن الوحي قد انقطع، وإنما نأخذكم الآن بما ظهر لنا من أعمالكم. فمن أظهر لنا خيرا أمناه وقربناه وليس إلينا من سريرته شيء. الله يحاسبه في سريرته. ومن أظهر لنا سوء لم نأمنه ولم نصدقه، وإن قال أن سريرته حسنة. (صحيح مسلم)

ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUqbah relates: I heard ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu saying: During the era of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam people used to be taken (treated) through divine revelation. Now

that divine revelation has ended, we will treat you on the basis of your external actions. (This means that sincere Muslims were distinguished from the hypocrites through divine revelation. Now the distinguishing factor is external actions). Thus, whoever displays good (īmān and equity), we will consider him to be safe, bring him close to us, and we are not to investigate his internal condition. Allāh taʿālā will take him to account for that. And whoever displays evil to us, we will not consider him to be safe and we will not believe him even if he claims that his internal self is good.[1]

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent subject written by Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *raḥimahullāh*! It is certainly a cause of removing constriction from our hearts and bringing tranquillity to it. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him. (compiler)

Internal effulgence depends on remaining within the Sharīʿat

Hadrat Sayyidunā ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangohī *raḥimahullāh* says:

Every effulgence and happiness which is not within the circle of the Sharīʿat must be considered to be a deception and a whispering from Shaytān. Many people of the sulūk deviated from the path when they abandoned the Sharīʿat. Many people of tauhīd are wandering aimlessly because of not holding on firmly to the Sharīʿat. Anything which is not in accordance with the demands of the Sharīʿat is certainly a whispering from Shaytān.

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[1] *Irtifāʿ ad-Dīq.*

My dear friend! Even if a person has full knowledge of recognition and Allāh's oneness, and he is a man of supernatural feats, he cannot be free from the fear of deception if he does not adhere to the injunctions of the Sharīʿat. This is because going against the Sharīʿat, disrespect, and the appearance of supernatural feats are nothing but deceptions.[1]

Note: Understand this theme well because many of those who are ignorant of the path make claims to close affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*, recognition and wilāyat even though they act against the Sharīʿat. This is most certainly a deception of the self. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

An article on recognition by Qāḍī ʿĀbid ʿAlī Ḥusaynī

Ḥaḍrat Qāḍī Sayyid ʿĀbid ʿAlī al-Ḥusaynī Bhopālī *raḥimahullāh* was a khalīfah of Masīḥul Ummat Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Masīḥullāh Khān Ṣāḥib Jalālābādī *raḥimahullāh* (d. 1992).

I now take the opportunity of quoting an article which explains maʿrifat in a very expressive manner. It is from the book *Quṭb Mālwah* of Ḥaḍrat Qāḍī Sayyid ʿĀbid ʿAlī Wajdī al-Ḥusaynī *raḥimahullāh* who was a judge in the city of Bhopal. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to not only benefit from it but to be enlightened by it. Āmīn.

Man's birth is for Allāh's recognition

Whatever Allāh *taʿālā* created from the earth to the heavens has been created for man's benefit. Every creation – acting on the order of its Creator – is at the

[1] *Laṭā'if Quddūsī*.

service of Allāh's vicegerent, i.e. man, and is at his beck and call all the time.

The sun rises every morning from the East, spreads it warm and energizing rays of light, and provides warmth to life. Similarly, the moon spreads its cool light, and the stars their soft and soothing effulgence in their respective orbits; and are conveying immense and countless benefits to this earthly creature – man.

The sky takes on the duty of the shade of an affectionate father while the earth becomes a loving lap of the mother, and are – in this way – seeing to the upbringing of this vicegerent of Allāh *taʿālā*. The inanimate objects, plants and animals that are created in this world are also occupied in the service of man. Allāh's mercy rains down from the clouds, gives life and lushness to the land, and provides the means for continued existence and progress. The mountain ranges are placed on earth as pegs and holding it in place. On one hand, the ice mountains in the North and South Poles are providing life in the form of oceans and seas, while on the other hand, deep-rooted trees are providing the means for construction works. Similarly, various trees, grains, vegetables, herbs and fruit trees are providing sustenance to man. Animals – whether of land or earth, wild or domesticated – are all providing some sort benefit to man.

Allāh sent everything for man's service

Allāh *taʿālā* created everything for man's service and to be of use to him. Even if the smallest thing in the universe no longer exists, man will feel its absence and will need it at some time or the other. But if man no longer exists (as he was non-existent in the beginning), neither will the sun's light decrease nor will the moon go into eclipse. Neither will the

movement of the stars be affected nor will their light. There will be no difference in the movement of the winds nor any lull in the waves of the oceans. The sun will continue glittering by day, the moon will be giving off its cool light by the night and the stars will carry on spreading their light. In like manner, everything on earth will continue carrying out the task which Allāh *taʿālā* assigned to it.

This is why we will have to accept that all the creations have been created for man, but man has not been created for any creation. Rather, Allāh *taʿālā* created man for Himself because He sent him to earth as His heir-incumbent and His vicegerent.

When Allāh *taʿālā* willed to create man and sent him into the world as His vicegerent, He appointed the planet earth as his kingdom. He made the blue sky the roof of his kingdom and hung glittering lights and candles in it. The soft ground was laid out as a carpet for him. In order to keep his kingdom green and lush, Allāh *taʿālā* appointed the clouds with heavenly breezes to send down rains; and He created the sun, moon and stars to keep it illuminated.

Allāh *taʿālā* then embellished man's kingdom with beautiful sceneries of jungles, mountains, oceans and rivers. Gardens and orchards filled with attractive and brightly coloured flowers, fragrant petals, delicious fruits and vegetables are to be seen everywhere. Swaying trees and plants are presented before man to bring delight to his eyes and joy to his ears.

Allāh sent man for a great responsibility

In order to maintain and continue human life, Allāh *taʿālā* spread out the tablecloth of His bounties on earth. For the future, He placed gold, silver and other

jewels in the bowels of the earth; and preserved the most liquid wealth (petrol) of this era. This massive factory from the earth to the skies has been set up because the groom (man) of this wedding is being sent for a great responsibility and a wise objective. That lofty object is to fill this materialistically dark world with the light of spirituality. The effulgent soul inside man has been given dark clothing so that he may strive to his utmost in seeking progress through genuine Allāh-recognition and total obedience. He must become resplendent with divine light, look at all of Allāh's creations with love, become dyed in the colour of His universal divinity, treat Allāh's creations well, formulate a society which is filled with the pure services of love, and thereby make the society an example of life in Paradise.

Our material life is a prelude to our spiritual life

Our material life is in actual fact a prelude to our spiritual life; it is the tillage for the Hereafter. This worldly life is a station for an onward journey. In fact, this world is a stop-over after which comes the life of the grave and then the Hereafter. When the soul takes a step in walking towards Allāh *taʿālā*, there will be no limit to its walking within Allāh *taʿālā*.

Thus, this concept can never be correct that Allāh's creation – man – comes into this world, eats and drinks for a few days and then dies. The Qur'ān repeatedly states that the creation of the universe is a sign of the truth, and rejects the view that this great act [of creation of the universe] was an exercise in futility. Allāh *taʿālā* says: We did not create the heavens, the earth and all the creations between these two in vain.

Actions either end in Paradise or Hell

There is a result and outcome for every single action and endeavour of man. Just as we cannot say that the actions of Allāh *taʿālā* in this universe and His wise administration are in vain, in the same way we will have to accept this fact that the result of this world is the Hereafter; and that actions either end in Paradise or Hell. It should be borne in mind that no act of man can be rewarding unless it is attached to īmān and recognition. We can therefore conclude that man's creation was for Allāh-recognition.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

I created man and jinn solely for My worship.[1]

The fundamental objective in creating man is to acquire Allāh's recognition

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* explains the words "for My worship" as "for My recognition". Thus, the fundamental objective of man's creation is to recognize Allāh *taʿālā*. This is in fact that heavy responsibility which man undertook to bear while the heavens, earth and mountains refused. The Qur'ān states:

> We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to bear it and they were afraid of it. Man undertook to bear it; he is very merciless, immature.[2]

Hadrat Shaykh Najm ad-Dīn Kubrā says in his explanation to the above: The weight of trust cannot

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[1] Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 56.
[2] Sūrah al-Ahzāb, 33: 72.

be borne without the qualities of "merciless" and "immature". It is the innate nature of these two qualities which steer him towards it. Trustworthiness cannot be seen without spiritual purity and effulgence of the heart. The angels were able to see it through their spiritual purity but because they did not have the physical power and capability, they could not bear it. The animals certainly possessed the physical strength and capability but were devoid of spiritual purity. This is why they too fell short in bearing it. On the other hand, man had both spiritual purity and physical strength, this is why he received this special honour.[1]

There are three types of maʿrifat or recognition:

1. Maʿrifat ʿaqlī.
2. Maʿrifat naẓarī.
3. Maʿrifat shuhūdī.

1. Maʿrifat ʿaqlī has to do with the senses, mental perceptions and physical strengths – all of which are possessed by every person of intelligence.

2. Maʿrifat naẓarī is enjoyed by certain individuals before whom the outward veils have been removed and for whom there is a sign of Allāh *taʿālā* in every single thing which steers them towards the Oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*.

3. Maʿrifat shuhūdī is the station of the special servants the reality of which, in the language of the Sufis, is that no matter what I set my eyes on, I see

[1] *Mirṣād al-ʿIbād*, p. 28.

Allāh *taʿālā* in it. According to Hadrat Shaykh, the universe was created for maʿrifat shuhūdī.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* ordered His vicegerent, man, to traverse within his self and through the world:

> We shall show them Our signs in this world and in their very selves until it becomes apparent to them that this is correct.[2]

When man places his foot on the path of maʿrifat and becomes immersed in travelling through himself, unique manifestations of light and effulgent scenes are illuminated before him, and his heart becomes illuminated by various "colours" of Allāh's manifestations.

This is realized through the path of meditation and the treasure of observation. When he becomes lost in those astounding observations and tries to focus his attention on that fountainhead from where they are emanating, then the grand reality of:

من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه

The one who recognized his self has certainly recognized Allāh taʿālā.

Manifests itself to him. This is why the path of maʿrifat is in fact the path of sulūk. And no path can be traversed without a guide. This is why before a person can tread the different stages of this path, he is in need of an expert who has affiliation with Allāh *taʿālā*.

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[1] *Mirsād al-ʿIbād*, p. 78.
[2] Sūrah Hā Mīm as-Sajdah, 41: 53.

Hadrat Khwājah Najm ad-Dīn Kubrā *raḥimahullāh* says:

> The carnal self, desires and Shaytān are man's biggest enemies. This is why this path cannot be traversed without appointing a man of spirituality as one's guide.[1]

As stated previously, man is on a journey and this world is one stage of that journey with the Hereafter his destination. At every step of this journey, there are thieves and robbers who are waiting to lead man astray from the path and to cause him to lose his destination.

These thieves, robbers and enemies of Dīn are found within and without. Within man are his personal and carnal desires. They create evil inclinations and feelings from within and place man onto the wrong path. Shaytān and his progeny do their work from the outside. On the very first day Shaytān had taken an oath that he would lead the progeny of Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām* astray. He has his web of deception spread everywhere. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* sent Prophets and Messengers in every era and to every nation for the guidance of man and to invite him towards Allāh *taʿālā*. In this way, Allāh's evidence is established.

The Qur'ānic pledge of allegiance is found from the first covenant

The allegiance which Hadrat Shaykh Najm ad-Dīn Kubrā *raḥimahullāh* points to, and its reality which Shaykh Abul Hasan Kharqānī *raḥimahullāh* makes reference to is to be found in the Qur'ānic bayʿat or

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[1] *Mirsād al-ʿIbād*, p. 147.

the first covenant which was made in the world of souls (ʿālam al-arwāh).

Whatever situations related to knowledge and recognition which man experiences in this material world are reflections of incidents which took place in the ʿālam al-arwāh. For example, īmān, kufr, recognition, negligence; or even the situations related to affiliation and affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* and their manifestation. All this took place in the very beginning. Whatever displays itself in this material world had first taken place in the unseen world which is beyond our intellect and senses.

Long before the souls could come into this material world, Allāh *taʿālā* assembled them on the plains of ʿArafāt in the valley of Nuʿmān. When Allāh *taʿālā* passed His blessed hand over the back of man's father, Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām*, then all the souls which were to come from that time until the day of Resurrection gushed forth like ants onto the field. When they assembled before Allāh *taʿālā*, a sweet and pleasing sound emanated from Him which then attracted the souls towards it like a magnet. This sweet sound was: *Alastu Bi Rabbikum* Allāh *taʿālā* asked the souls: "Am I not your Lord?"

Bearing in mind that this took place in the ʿālam al-arwāh which was a purely effulgent world or the unseen world, then it is highly possible that Allāh *taʿālā* cast a reflection of His divinity onto the souls, and exposed a part of His matchless beauty.

When the beauty of Allāh *taʿālā* manifested itself and the sweet and melodious sound of *Alastu Bi Rabbikum* settled in the ears, then can there be anyone who was desirous of beholding the beauty of Allāh *taʿālā* not reply in the positive by saying: *Balā!* (Indeed)? The seed of love and recognition was

planted there and then in the fertile heart in that effulgent world. This was the first display of the mutual recognition and affiliation of the souls between themselves.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الأرواح جنود مجندة، فما تعارف منها ائتلف، وما تناكر منها اختلف.[1]

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: The souls are mustered armies. Those which recognized each other in that world developed affinity for each other in this world, while those which did not recognize each other in that world remained distant and separated from each other in this world.

When that effulgent soul became confined in this material and earthly body, the attractions of this material life, the magnetism of wealth and riches, the hopes of authority and popularity, and the deceptions of carnal desires and attractions caused the soul to become immersed in materialism. The veil of negligence was now being placed over man's intelligence. The soul began wandering in this material world and became trapped by the spell of selfishness, egotism and self-worship. Bearing in mind this natural weakness in man, Allāh *taʿālā* sent Messengers and Prophets in every era and to every nation to remind man of his first covenant.

The Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* came into this world with divine teachings and guidelines as teachers of humanity to remind man of his forgotten lessons and refresh his memory about the covenant which he took with Allāh *taʿālā*. In this way, no man can

[1] صحيح البخاري: ح ٣٣٣٧.

present the excuse of forgetfulness or negligence. One of the names of the Qur'ān is *adh-Dhikr* (the reminder) and so is one of the titles of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In other words, the teachings and guidelines of the Prophets and Messengers are not new things; they are reminding man of his past covenant.

The first bayʿat was made to Allāh

The first bayʿat or pledge of allegiance of all the souls was made to Allāh *taʿālā* Himself. This bayʿat was then renewed at the hands of the Prophets and Messengers, and emphasised at the hands of their deputies (the ʿulamā' and Sufis). Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُبَايِعُوْنَكَ اِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ، يَدُ اللّٰهِ فَوْقَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ

Surely those who pledge their allegiance to you, they pledge allegiance to Allāh. The hand of Allāh is above their hands.[1]

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a joyous piece of information for man that Allāh *taʿālā* took a pledge from His creation for the fulfilment of the covenant of *Alastu Bi Rabbikum*. Allāh *taʿālā* then ordained for it to be renewed at the hands of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. And after them, their heirs – the ʿulamā' and Sufis – renewed that covenant through the system of bayʿat. Thus, this bayʿat is not only a Sunnat of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* but of Allāh *taʿālā* Himself. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

Someone might have this doubt in his mind that he neither remembers this incident nor does he recall

[1] Sūrah al-Fath, 48: 10.

anything about the covenant. The first answer is that it took place in the world of souls, so we will have to revert to the men of spirituality for its affirmation. We will have to ask those who have reached the high levels of spirituality. After all, the view of the expert in each field is taken into consideration. A sick person has to revert to a doctor or physician, while the grading of a scientific invention will have to be done by a scientist. Whatever they say will be accepted. Every person is not an expert in every field. Thus, in this regard we will have to revert to the spiritual masters and men of recognition.

When the imām of the Sufis, Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, was asked about the covenant of *Alastu Bi Rabbikum*, he replied: "I fully remember the incident related to this covenant." The famous Sufis, Hadrat Dhun Nūn Misrī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Sahl ibn ʿAbdillāh Tusturī *rahimahullāh* not only acknowledged remembering this incident but used to say: "That effulgent scene is still visible before our eyes." Hadrat Khwājah Nizām ad-Dīn Auliyā' *rahimahullāh* who is a senior elder of the Chishtī family says: "The tone and tune in which the question *Alastu Bi Rabbikum* was posed is still ringing in my ears." When such senior masters and experts of spirituality are acknowledging this incident, there remains no room for negligent and godless people like us to reject it.

The second answer to the above doubt is that ever since the inception of this world, attestation to Allāh's divinity or conviction in Him has been found in the hearts of people in every era. Belief in the existence of Allāh *taʿālā* in some form or the other has been found most of the time. Even if a few sick souls reject Him, it does not affect the fundamental

issue in any way. Like a person suffering from yellow jaundice – if he finds sugar to be bitter, we will say that there is something wrong with his taste buds and needs to be treated.

If someone says: We do not know when and in what situation this incident took place, then the answer to him according to Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautwī *raḥimahullāh* is that if an educated person is asked under whom and where did he commence his education, who taught him the alphabets, who were his teachers, and who were his classmates; then most people will not be able to give answers to these questions. Nonetheless, by not being able to answer these questions, no person can say that the person did not go through a process of education. If the inability to remember the childhood of this world does not affect the fundamental issue in any way, how can the spiritual issue which took place at the very beginning affect the fundamental reality?

No matter what, man has been created in this world for the recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*. The entire universe from the earth to the heavens is testifying to this.[1]

The cause of the perfection of Allāh-recognition

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā ʿAbd al-Ghanī Ṣāḥib Phūlpūrī *raḥimahullāh*, a khalīfah of Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīmul Ummat *raḥimahullāh*, writes in *Maʿrifat-e-Ilāhīyyah*:

Your recognition could not be completed in the ʿālam al-arwāḥ because the soul on its own did not have the feelings of hunger and thirst, there were no limbs for worship through which they could display their

[1] Qāḍī Sayyid ʿĀbid ʿAlī Wajdī al-Ḥusaynī: *Sawāniḥ Quṭb Mālwah*, pp. 45-56.

obedience in the standing, bowing and prostrating postures. Man was then created totally dependent with this body and sent into this world so that at every step of the way he may be in need, and call out for the fulfilment of his needs. Through his needs, he may acquire My recognition.

The soul by itself neither feels hunger nor thirst. In such a situation, how will a servant understand My divinity and My attribute of being the true Sustainer? Now when he is restless on account of hunger and thirst, has a meal and drinks cool water, he will automatically thank Me. When he repents over his sins and sheds tears of remorse, My mercy will accept his repentance and forgive him his sins. At this time, he will recognize My mercifulness, quality of forgiving and pardoning. I will conceal his sins although I am fully aware of them. In this way he will recognize My quality of concealing. When I do not exact revenge despite My absolute power, he will come to know of My kindness and forbearance. I will sometimes inflict My punishment on a nation which has transgressed the limits. Man will learn of My qualities of "exacter of revenge", "severe in punishment" and My might. Furthermore these incidents will serve as lessons for other regions and places.

In the same way, all My beautiful names together with My divinity will be observed throughout the world all the time. In this way, I will be recognized as *Rabb al-ʿĀlamīn* – Lord of the worlds. Thus, the sole objective of creating man in the ʿālam al-arwāḥ, and sending him into this world with countless needs is so that he may recognize Me together with My attributes and qualities, and he is embellished with My love. All this was not possible in the ʿālam al-

arwāḥ with the soul by itself. There were no needs there - no hunger, thirst and other needs – through which man could recognize My attributes. He had no hands, legs and tongue through which he could perform ṣalāh, keep fasts and do other acts of worship through which he could perfect his love for Allāh *taʿālā*. On hearing the voice of *Alastu Bi Rabbikum* in the ʿālam al-arwāḥ, a unique feeling of recognition and love had pervaded the soul. When it came into this world and did not find that immersing joy, the soul became restless, felt the pain of separation, and began complaining about its separation.[1]

Reflecting over Allāh's signs is essential for Allāh-recognition

In his introduction to *Riyāḍ aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn*, Ḥaḍrat ʿAllāmah Muḥīy ad-Dīn an-Nawawī *raḥimahullāh* writes:

> They are occupied in His meditation and continuous reflection.

In his commentary to the above text, Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʿAllān aṣ-Ṣiddīqī ash-Shāfiʿī al-Ashʿarī al-Makkī *raḥimahullāh* (d. 1057 A.H.) writes in *Dalīl al-Fāliḥīn*:

In other words, pondering over the creations of Allāh *taʿālā*, recognizing His divinity, and evidences of the greatness of His power have kept them preoccupied.

As Allāh *taʿālā* says:

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[1] Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Shāh ʿAbd al-Ghanī: *Maʿrifat-e-Ilāhīyyah*, p. 334.

إِنَّ فِيْ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيٰتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ. اَلَّذِيْنَ يَذْكُرُوْنَ اللهَ قِيٰمًا وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ فِيْ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ.

Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of the day and night are signs for the intelligent. Those who remember Allāh standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth.[1]

A Ḥadīth states: "Ponder and reflect over the signs of Allāh *taʿālā*, but not on His Being." Another Ḥadīth contains the words: "Ponder and reflect over the creation but not the Creator because you cannot fully recognize Him." A marfūʿ Ḥadīth in *al-Kashshāf* reads: "A man was lying flat on his bed and looked up towards the stars and the sky. He said: 'I testify that you have a Lord and a Creator. O Allāh, forgive me.' Allāh *taʿālā* looked at him with mercy and forgave him." Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "There is no worship like pondering and reflecting." It is said that pondering removes heedlessness, and creates submission in the heart just as water is a cause of produce in the land. There is nothing like worry to polish the hearts, and nothing like reflection to illuminate them.

It is said that deeds equal to the deeds of all the people of the world used to be raised [to Allāh *taʿālā*] for Ḥaḍrat Yūnus *ʿalayhis salām*. This is because he used to ponder and reflect over the affairs of Allāh *taʿālā*; and this pondering is an action of the heart. Because a person cannot do with his limbs so many

[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 190-191.

actions in a single day which equal the actions of the entire creation.

Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: Pondering and reflecting for an hour is better than standing in worship for the entire night.

As-Surī as-Saqaṭī *rahimahullāh* said: Pondering and reflecting for an hour is better than one year's worship. This is because if you loosen the ropes of your tent, they will convey you to Paradise.[1]

Allāh's recognition is dependent on recognition of the self

Hadrat Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ghanī ar-Rāfiʿī aṭ-Ṭarābilisī *rahimahullāh*, the author of *Tarsīʿ al-Jawāhir al-Makkīyyah* writes:

أقول قد أجمع العارفون على أن معرفة الله تعالى مترتبة على معرفة النفس، فمن عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه.

The ʿārifūn concur that the recognition of Allāh taʿālā is dependent on the recognition of the self, because the one who recognizes his self has certainly recognized his Lord.[2]

In his book *Natā'ij*, Sayyid Mustafā ʿArūsī explains the words "the one who recognizes his self" as follows:

The person who recognizes his self and its attributes, and realizes that they are the effects of Allāh *taʿālā* and His attributes, and reflections of His names,

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[1] *Dalīl al-Fālihīn.*

[2] *Tarsīʿ al-Jawāhir al-Makkīyyah*, p. 19.

then he has recognized the truth. This means that the person learns these points through his feelings and presence, and not through proofs and evidences. Because this is the type of knowledge of the ʿulamā' of customs. The essence of all this is that all things apart from Allāh *taʿālā* are the effects of Allāh *taʿālā* which stem from His actions. The person who understands this through exposition and emotion has, so to say, recognized Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

Note: Some ʿulamā' explain the above by saying that the person who realizes the incapability of his self has recognized the power and might of Allāh *taʿālā*. The one who recognizes his ignorance has recognized the knowledge and wisdom of Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham learns recognition from a monk

Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *raḥimahullāh* said: I learnt recognition from a Christian monk whose name was Abū Samʿān.

He had discarded the world and used to live in a forest, hungry and thirsty, for a long period of time. The monk's story is a very admonitory and astonishing story.

Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *raḥimahullāh* continues: "I asked the monk, 'Since when are you living here?' He replied: 'I am living in this monastery for the past 70 years.'

I asked: 'What do you eat?' He replied: 'I eat just one chickpea every night.' (in other words, just one chickpea in 24 hours).

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[1] *Hāshiyah Tarsīʿ al-Jawāhir al-Makkīyyah*, p. 20.

I said: 'One single chickpea is very little. How do you make do with so little food, and what is the reason for this?'

قال: ترى الدير بحذائك؟ قلت نعم. قال إنهم يأتوني في كل سنة يوما واحدا، فيزينون صومعتي ويطوفون حواليها ويعظموني بذلك، فكلما تثاقلت نفسي عن العبادة ذكرتها تلك الساعة، وأنا أحتمل جهد سنة لعز ساعة، فاحتمل يا حنيفي جهد ساعة لعز الأبد، فوقر في قلبي المعرفة.[1]

He replied: Can you see those houses in the distance?' I replied: 'Yes.' He said: 'The residents of that place come just once a year to my monastery. They decorate it and make ṯawāf of it out of love and respect for me. Whenever my self finds it burdensome to engage in worship, I remind it of that single hour in the year in which the people pay their respects to me. Thus, I bear the hardships of the entire year for that single hour of respect. O Muslim brother! In this one hour of this worldly life (one's entire life in this world is like an hour of the Hereafter), you must bear the pain and hardship for the eternal life of the Hereafter.'"

Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham says: "This advice of the monk created in my heart the greatness of the recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*."

The crux of this story is that the monk discarded the world, engaged in worship according to the Christian religion by day and night, remained hungry for the entire year, and ate just one chickpea in 24 hours because the Christian people used to assemble in his

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[1] حلية الأولياء، ج ٨، ص ٢٩.

monastery only once a year, pay their respects to him and make ṯawāf of his monastery out of love for him. This meeting used to last for an hour or two.

Thus, we see the monk bearing hardships and difficulties for the entire year merely for this annual meeting. Look at the valuable piece of advice which he gave to Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *raḥimahullāh*! O Ibrāhīm! You are a Muslim. You believe in the eternal joy and honour of the Hereafter. Therefore, O Muslim, take a lesson from my condition. In order to enjoy the eternal honour and unending joy of the Hereafter, you must willingly engage in Allāh's worship and His remembrance, and bear the hardships of discarding the enjoyments of this world. This worldly life is extremely short. It will pass by like a single hour, after which you will acquire eternal honour and joy.

Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *raḥimahullāh* continues: The monk, Abū Samʿān said to me: "I would like to apprise my people about your honour and greatness through additional information." He then asked me to go down and stand on a spot from where I can see the people from a distance.

قال إبراهيم: فنزلت فأدلى لي ركوة فيها عشرين حمصة، فقال لي: أدخل الدير فقد رأوا ما أدليت إليك.

I descended from the monastery and stood on a certain spot. The monk lowered his pitcher towards me. It contained 20 chickpeas. He then said to me: "Go towards those houses because the people there saw what I lowered to you."

When I went to that locality the people said to me: "O Muslim brother! What did our monk give you when

he lowered his pitcher to you?" I informed them that he placed 20 chickpeas in the pitcher and lowered it to me.

قالوا: وما تصنع به؟ نحن أحق به، قالوا ساوم، قلت عشرين دينارا، فأعطوني عشرين دينارا.

They asked: "What are you going to do with it? We have more right over it. Tell us your price and we will pay you for it." I said: "20 dīnārs." They paid me the 20 dirhams and bought the chickpeas.

Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *raḥimahullāh* continues: When I went back to the monk, he asked: "O Muslim brother! What did you do with those chickpeas?" I replied: "They believed that your chickpeas were blessed and therefore paid me 20 dīnārs for them."

قال: أخطأت، لو ساومتهم عشرين ألفا لأعطوك، هذا عز من لا يعبده، فانظر كيف يكون عز من يعبده. يا حنيفي! أقبل على ربك ودع الذهاب والجيئة.[1]

The monk said: You made a mistake. Had you asked them 20 000 dīnārs for those chickpeas they would have paid you. This is the honour accorded by Allāh to the one who does not worship Him. What, then, can be said of the one who worships Him? O Muslim! Turn your attention to Allāh, worship Him, and give up moving around pointlessly."[2]

Ḥadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* used to read this story to us from *Iḥyā' al-ʿUlūm* with much

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[1] حلية الأولياء، ح ٨، ص ٢٩.

[2] *Gulistān Qanāʿat*, p. 373.

enthusiasm. However, I could not find it despite searching for it. (compiler)

The easiest way of reaching Allāh is to realize one's helplessness

Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* said that the statement of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* on the subject of tauhīd is the most comprehensive.

سبحان من لم يجعل لخلقه سبيلا إلا بالعجز

Glory to the One who made no path other than helplessness for His creation.

Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Kabīr Rifāʿī *rahimahullāh* (d. 578 A.H.) says:

> Dear friends! I exhausted my life, traversed every path which I gauged to be the correct one through a genuine intention and striving. I have concluded that the closest, most luminous and most beloved path is that of practising on the Sunnat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and following the ways of the humble ones. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said that all praise is due to Allāh who made no path other than submission the means to reach Him. (Every person can therefore choose submission as opposed to its opposite).[1]

The embodiment of submission – Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

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[1] *Al-Bunyān al-Mushayyad*, p. 95; *Aqwāl Salaf*, vol. 3, p. 188.

اَلْعَجْزُ فَخْرِيْ

Submission is my pride.

Hadrat Maulānā Qādī Muhammad Sulaymān Mansūrpūrī *rahimahullāh* writes in *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*:

We generally hear the quotation:

اَلْفَقْرُ فَخْرِيْ

Poverty is my pride.

However, the experts in the field of Hadīth state that these words are not established from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Hadrat ʿAllāmah Muhammad Tāhir Patnī *rahimahullāh* quotes the words "Submission is my pride" in his *Majmaʿ al-Bihār*.

The word *ʿajz* refers to submission. It also refers to the inability to carry out a task which was delegated. However the latter meaning cannot apply to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* because his entire pure life was a manifestation of work, action, and total and complete striving.

Thus, the meaning of *ʿajz* in this context is that of submission and humbleness before Allāh *taʿālā*. This is the meaning which is suited to the greatness and might of Allāh *taʿālā*, and the condition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Look at the affluent people of the world and see how their pride and arrogance become inflated by just a little worldly progress, and they are unable to contain themselves. On the other hand, examine the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who was helped and supported by every atom of the ground

and every star of the sky, whose instructions were carried out immediately and whose greatness was sung in the heavens and earth. Despite all this, he offered his submission, humbleness and humility before Allāh *taʿālā* at every moment of his life; and he considered his submission to be a source of pride.

Examine the pure supplications of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which dissipate the heedlessness of the heart and remove the veil of the soul in such a manner that the most heedless person's heart is awakened and submits before the might of Allāh *taʿālā*.

One supplication is presented as an example. The reader is requested to ponder over its style, look at the loftiness in position, and see how these words emanated from the heart and tongue. They are themselves expressions of submission. See how it is considered to be a source of pride. It also teaches his followers what example they ought to follow.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّكَ تَسْمَعُ كَلَامِيْ، وَتَرٰى مَكَانِيْ، وَتَعْلَمُ سِرِّيْ وَعَلَانِيَتِيْ، لَا يَخْفٰى عَلَيْكَ شَيْءٌ مِّنْ اَمْرِيْ، وَاَنَا الْبَآئِسُ الْفَقِيْرُ، الْمُسْتَغِيْثُ الْمُسْتَجِيْرُ، الْوَجِلُ الْمُشْفِقُ، الْمُقِرُّ الْمُعْتَرِفُ بِذَنْبِيْ. اَسْاَلُكَ مَسْاَلَةَ الْمِسْكِيْنِ، وَاَبْتَهِلُ اِلَيْكَ ابْتِهَالَ الْمُذْنِبِ الذَّلِيْلِ. وَاَدْعُوْكَ دُعَآءَ الْخَآئِفِ الضَّرِيْرِ، وَدُعَآءَ مَنْ خَضَعَتْ لَكَ رَقَبَتُهُ، وَفَاضَتْ لَكَ عَبْرَتُهُ، وَذَلَّ لَكَ جِسْمُهُ، وَرَغِمَ لَكَ اَنْفُهُ. اَللّٰهُمَّ لَا تَجْعَلْنِيْ بِدُعَآئِكَ شَقِيًّا، وَّكُنْ بِيْ رَءُوْفًا رَّحِيْمًا، يَا خَيْرَ الْمَسْئُوْلِيْنَ، وَيَا خَيْرَ الْمُعْطِيْنَ.

O Allāh! You hear my speech, You can see where I am, You know whatever I conceal and whatever I disclose, nothing of mine can remain concealed from You. I am

the one who is afflicted, the one who is in need, the one who is crying out for help, the one who is seeking refuge, the one who is in fear, the one who is in awe [of You], the one who admits and confesses his sins. I beg of You the begging of a destitute, I beseech You the beseeching of a wretched sinner, I ask You the asking of a fearful person who has been afflicted by a calamity, and the asking of a person whose neck is submitted before You, whose tears are flowing for You, whose body is humbled before You, and who has submitted himself before You. O Allāh! Do not make me despondent in my supplication to You. Be kind and merciful to me. O the best of those who is asked! O the best of those who bestows!

Allāh is the Greatest! This is that lesson of recognition with which, if a believer, presents himself with his heart and tongue in the court of Allāh *taʿālā*, then His mercy will most certainly steer him, His love will enlighten his path, and sincerity and devotion will elevate him from this earthly level to the rank of acceptance and honour. Congratulations to such people![1]

Note: Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* spent the whole month of Ramadān 1383 A.H. in explaining the above duʿā'. This was then compiled and collated, and printed under the title *Iʿtirāf-e-Dhunūb*. I then added *Iʿtirāf-e-Qusūr* to it and had both published together.[2] All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the ʿulamā' and Sufis approved of the addendum just as they did of the original. (compiler)

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[1] *Rahmatul Lil ʿĀlamīn*, vol. 3, p. 231.

[2] All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this book has been translated into English and is available under the title *Confession of Sins*. (translator)

Ahlesunnah Library [ahlesunnahlibrary.com]

Allāh's recognition is life to the heart

Hadrat Khwājah Muhammad Maʿsūm Sirhindī *rahimahullāh* said: I cannot understand how a person who is devoid of Allāh's recognition is living his life! And how he is attracted to other things, while his condition ought to be as described in the following couplet:

> How can I occupy my eyes and heart with something else when my heart is searching for You alone, and my eyes are desirous of beholding You alone!?[1]

[1] *Maktūbāt Maʿsūmīyyah.*

TASAWWUF

Honourable reader! An old, authoritative and well-known book on the subject of tasawwuf is *Kitāb at-Taʿarruf Li Madh-hab Ahl at-Tasawwuf* of Shaykh Abū Bakr ibn Abī Is-ḥāq al-Kalābāzī *raḥimahullāh* (d. 385 A.H.). This book is well-received among the Sufi circles to this day, and commentaries on it have been written in every era. The greatness of this book can be gauged from the statement of Shaykh Shihāb ad-Dīn Sahrawardī *raḥimahullāh* (d. 585 A.H.) when he said:

لو لا التعرف لما عرف التصوف

Had it not been for the book at-Taʿarruf we would not have known the science of tasawwuf.[1]

My heart desires to quote a few lines from this book with regard to the reason why the Sufis are referred to as Sufis. The elders have a few statements in this regard. These are quoted here. Allāh willing, they will prove to be impressive.

قولهم في الصوفية لِمَ سميت الصوفية صوفية.

قالت طائفة إنما سميت الصوفية صوفية لصفاء أسرارهم ونقاء آثارهم.

Why are the Sufis referred to as Sufis? It is because of the purity of their internal selves and spotlessness of their effects and contributions.

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[1] Professor Yūsuf Salīm Chisthī: *Tārīkh Tasawwuf*, p. 335.

وقال بعضهم للصوفي من صفت لله معاملته فصفت له من الله عز وجل كرامته.

A Sufi is one whose relationship with Allāh is pure, so Allāh's affection towards him is pure.

وقال قوم إنما سموا صوفية لأنهم في الصف الأول بين يدي الله تعالى بارتفاع همم اليه وإقبالهم بقلوبهم عليه ووقوفهم بأسرارهم بين يديه.

Sufis are named such because they are in the first row in front of Allāh taʿālā on account of their lofty aspirations, their turning to Him with all their heart, and their standing before Him with all their secrets and mysteries.

وقال قوم إنما سموا صوفية لقرب أوصافهم من أهل الصفة الذين كانوا على عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

They are named Sufis because their qualities are very close to the people of Suffah in the time of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.

وقال قوم إنما سموا صوفية للبسهم الصوف، أما من جعل نسبتهم إلى الصوف فإنه عبر عن ظاهر أحوالهم.

They are named Sufis because they were sūf (woollen garments). The one who attributes them to this [wool] does so on the basis of their external conditions.

Tasawwuf

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes in *Tasawwuf Aur Nisbat Sūfīyyah*:

Hadrat Abū Yahyā Zakarīyyā Ansārī Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* says that the origins of tasawwuf are found in the Hadīth of Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* in which it is said:

ما الإحسان؟ قال أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك.

What is ihsān? It means you must worship Allāh as though you are seeing Him. If you cannot imagine seeing Him, you must believe that He is seeing you.

Tasawwuf is another name for ihsān. We learn from this that a Sufi is one who is close to Allāh *taʿālā* and one who sees Him. We learn from the Qur'ān itself that there are different levels of people. Some of them are the as-hāb al-yamīn (people of the right side), others are referred to as the muqarrabīn (those who are close to Allāh *taʿālā*). The person who ensures that his īmān is correct and practises according to the orders and prohibitions of the Sharīʿat then he is from among the as-hāb al-yamīn. The one who has these qualities and the following additional qualities, then he is referred to as a muqarrab, a muhsin and a Sufi. The additional qualities are: (1) his times of negligence and heedlessness are minimal, (2) there is an abundance of optional acts of obedience and devotions in him, (3) the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* overwhelms his heart, (4) he is continuously beseeching Allāh *taʿālā* and supplicating to Him.[1]

The reason for the name tasawwuf

After the blessed era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, those who were the seniors among the Muslims did not have any specific name (except for

[1] *Maʿārif Sūfīyyah*, p. 272.

Saḥābah of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*). This is because there was no greater virtue than being a Saḥābī to which a person could be attributed. When the era of the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* ended and the next era arrived, those who had the honour of the company of the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* were known as Tābiʿūn. After that, they were divided into various levels. Those who were very particular in adhering to Dīnī matters were referred to as zāhid and ʿābid (ascetics and worshippers). Thereafter innovations began spreading and different groups began competing against each other to the extent that each group claimed that ascetics and worshippers were found only in its group or party. On seeing this, the elite from the Ahl as-Sunnat who had adopted the companionship of Allāh *taʿālā* for themselves and safeguarded their hearts against all that would cause negligence and heedlessness, coined the name taṣawwuf for their creed and path. The seniors and elders of this group came to be known by this name from the second century of the Hijrah. In other words, they were referred to as Sufis.[1]

Application of the name taṣawwuf

Although the name taṣawwuf became common after much time, there is no doubt that its application was to be found in the first era of Islam. The author of *Ibdāʿ* writes:

ظهرت التصوف في القرون الأولى للإسلام فكان له شأن عظيم، وكان المقصود منه في أول الأمر تقويم الأخلاق، وتهذيب النفوس وترويضها

[1] *Qushayrīyyah*, p. 8.

بأعمال الدين، وجذبها إليه، وجعله وجدانا لها، وتعريفها بحكمه وأسراره بالتدريج.

When tasawwuf appeared in the first centuries of Islam, it enjoyed a great status. From the beginning its objective was to set right ethics, to culture and habituate the self to actions of Dīn, to draw the self towards Dīn, to make Dīn a temperament of the self, and to accustom it gradually to the injunctions and mysteries of Dīn.[1]

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* says:

Tasawwuf was a phenomenal concept which the scholars of tasawwuf defined as follows:

هو علم تعرف به أحوال تزكية النفوس وتصفية الأخلاق وتعمير الظاهر والباطن لنيل سعادة الأبدية

It is a science through which the ways of purifying the self, setting right of character, and rectifying the internal and external are learnt in order to acquire eternal bliss.

Now which aspect of this definition could be wrong? Is it wrong to purify the self? Is it a bad thing to set right character and morals? Is rectifying the internal and external selves a futile act? Is it a waste of time to acquire eternal bliss? These are obviously excellent objectives whose realization is essential.[2]

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[1] *Maʿārif Sūfīyyah*, p. 274.
[2] *Maʿārif Sūfīyyah*, p. 275.

The objective of tasawwuf: to acquire affinity with Allāh

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* writes in *Tafhīmāt Ilāhīyyah* with reference to affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*:

> The Sufis' affiliation and affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* is a very great thing, but there is no regard for their customs and practices. This will weigh heavily on many people but Allāh *taʿālā* has delegated this task to me, this is why I will have to speak accordingly. I cannot bother about the statements of Zayd and 'Umar [every Tom, Dick and Harry].[1]

Note: The above statement of Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* proves the importance of affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*. Another point which we learn is that we must speak out the truth without fear of any criticism from anyone. (compiler)

Affinity with Allāh is fundamental

مرجع الطريق كلها إلى تحصيل هيئة نفسانية تسمى عندهم بالنسبة، لأنها انتساب وارتباط بالله عز وجل وبالسكينة والنور.

The fundamental of the path is the realization of a psychological state which the Sufis refer to as nisbat (affinity) because it entails an affiliation and bond with Allāh taʿālā. It is considered to be a source of tranquillity and effulgence.

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[1] *Tafhīmāt Ilāhīyyah.*

قال مرشدنا: وهذه النسبة لا تحصل إلا بعد انقطاع الارتباطات كلها بما سوى الله. كذا قال سيدنا حضرة جنيد رحمه الله تعالى: اتصال الحق بقدر الانفصال عن الخلق.

Our mentor said: This affinity can only be acquired when all affiliations and contacts apart from Allāh taʿālā are severed. Hadrat Junayd rahimahullāh said: A person's affiliation and bond with Allāh taʿālā will be according to the extent of the severance of his affiliation with the creation.

Shaykh Saʿdī *rahimahullāh* said:

> The outcome of futile relationships is nothing but futility. Once you break those relationships you will reach Allāh.

ولا تظنن أن النسبة لا تحصل إلا بهذه الأشغال، بل هذه طرق لتحصيلها من غير حصر فيها. وغالب الرأي عندي أن الصحابة والتابعين كانوا يحصلون السكينة بطرق أخرى. فمنها: المواظبة على الصلوات والتسبيحات في الخلوة مع المحافظة على شريطة الخشوع والحضور. ومنها: المواظبة على الطهارة وذكر هاذم اللذات وما أعد الله للمطيعين من الثواب وللعاصين له من العذاب، فيحصل انفكاك عن اللذات الحسية وانقلاع عنها. ومنها: المواظبة على تلاوة الكتاب التدبر فيه استماع كلام الواعظ وما في الحديث من الرقاق. وبالجملة فكانوا يواظبون على هذه الأشياء مدة كثيرة فتحصل ملكة راسخة وهيأة نفسانية فيحافظون عليها بقية العمر. وهذا المعنى هو المتوارث

عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من طريق مشائخنا. لا شك في ذلك. وإن اختلف الألوان واختلف طرق تحصيلها.

Do not think that the above-mentioned affinity can be acquired only through these exercises. The fact of the matter is that there is no limit to the ways in which it can be acquired. I am inclined to think that the Sahābah and Tābiʿūn used to acquire affinity through other ways. These ways include strict adherence to salutations [to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam] and remembrance of Allāh taʿālā in seclusion with the precondition of humility and presence of mind. It includes purity and the remembrance of death which cuts off all pleasures. Furthermore, the person must constantly think of the rewards which Allāh taʿālā has in store for His obedient servants and the different types of punishments which await the sinners. If he adheres to this and thinks of it constantly, it will result in his separation and severance from physical pleasures. It also includes reading the Qur'ān regularly, pondering over its meanings, listening to the one who advises him, and reflecting over those Ahādīth which soften the heart. In short, when the Sahābah and Tābiʿūn adhered to the above for lengthy periods of time, they acquired an intensely deep closeness with Allāh taʿālā and they used to continue on this path for the rest of their lives. This is the objective which has been inherited from Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam and come down to us through our mentors. There is no doubt in this even though the ways and methods of realizing nisbat may differ.[1]

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[1] Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muhaddith Dehlawī: *al-Qaul al-Jamīl.*

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *rahimahullāh* says: The reality is that nisbat in its broadest meaning refers to an affiliation with Allāh *taʿālā*. Based on this general meaning, even a flagrant sinner and immoral person is a man of nisbat.

ولو كان فاسقا فاجرا

This is because his affiliation with Allāh *taʿālā* is affirmed merely on the basis of īmān:

وهو مناط صحة إطلاق النسبة وقد تحقق بالإيمان

In the definition of the Sufis, nisbat refers to that bond with Allāh *taʿālā* for which two things are vital: (1) excessive remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*, (2) continuous obedience to Him. Without these two, the nisbat as defined by the Sufis cannot be realized and it is not within a person's choice, rather:

موعودة الترتب على الأمور الإختيارية.

It is dependent on certain matters which are within a person's choice.

فكأنها اختيارية ولا يخفى أن كثرة الذكر والمحافظة على العبادة أمران اختياريان لأن صدورهما عن الاختيار من البديهيات الأولية.

Thus, it is as though it is within a person's choice. Excessive remembrance of Allāh taʿālā and continuous obedience are both within a person's choice, after all, it is glaringly clear that they are executed by a person's choice.

Through the above-defined nisbat a seeker develops such a strong and deep bond with Allāh *taʿālā* that it is rarely neglected in quality and quantity:

ويكون صاحب النسبة العاشق المولع في عدم النسيان وعدم الذهول وفي الايتمار بالأوامر والانتهاء عن النواهي.

In short, the person of nisbat has a natural aversion towards acting against the Dīn as general believers have a rational aversion towards it. The primary objective of all the different forms of dhikr and other spiritual exercises is to acquire the above-defined nisbat which is obligatory because the hypocrites have been criticized for the opposite of abundant dhikr, viz. remembering Allāh *taʿālā* very little.

Looking at the Qur'ān is beneficial for affinity

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to repeatedly say that some seniors said that if a person has a weakness in his affinity, he must look at the House of Allāh [the Kaʿbah]. It will strengthen his bond with Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an easy prescription. We ought to practise on it.

Nonetheless, I can apply the above principle and say that since the House is attributed to Allāh *taʿālā* and a person strengthens his affiliation with Allāh *taʿālā* by looking at His House, in like manner, a person could certainly strengthen his affiliation by looking at the word of Allāh *taʿālā*, i.e. the Qur'ān. In fact, I can say that it is not possible for everyone to look at the House of Allāh because a person has to go to Makkah Mukarramah to look at it. On the other hand, it is easy for every member of Islam – male and female – to look at the Qur'ān. Thus, we have to engage in abundant recitation of the Qur'ān and look at it with respect and esteem. Affiliation with Allāh *taʿālā* will

certainly be developed in this way. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone. (compiler)

It is essential for ʿulamā' to acquire affinity with Allāh

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* said: I say to the Muslim masses that they are obligated to practise on the external acts of the Sharīʿah – like salāh, fasting and so on – with sincerity and devotion, and to abstain from committing sins. However, this is not enough for the ʿulamā'. In addition to the above, it is necessary for them to acquire affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*. If they do not, they will be questioned for it and they will be deprived of blessings in this world as well. It is essential for a person to be a man of affinity in order for him to pass on blessings to others.

Note: By the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, look at the excellent manner in which he differentiated between the ʿulamā' and non-ʿulamā'. This was really a grand position of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* when he made it essential for the masses to carry out the obligatory acts and necessary to abstain from sins, especially the major sins. This will suffice for them to acquire Allāh's pleasure. This is why when I addressed a general assembly at the khānqāh in Kantāriyah, I said to them: "You people have assembled here out of a quest for Dīn. Now remain firm on this. Be regular with salāh and fasting, and abstain from sins. Whether we meet or not, as long as you are concerned about your rectification, you will – inshā Allāh – continue progressing. Be convinced about this because Allāh *taʿālā* does not allow the quest of a seeker to go to waste." (compiler)

Differences in the condition of seekers

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* said: In the past when the Sufi masters used to confer khilāfat to anyone or when 'ulamā' used to give a certificate to a student, they used to feel a heavy weight and responsibility. They felt it was a trust from Allāh *ta'ālā* and they would make du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā* to enable the person to fulfil this trust in an excellent manner. Unfortunately this is no longer the situation. Instead, the acquisition of these positions are now used to acquire wealth and authority. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Hadrat Shaykh Akbar Muhīyy ad-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī *rahimahullāh* states in *Ādāb ash-Shaykh wa al-Murīd*:

إن الزمان مشحون بالدعاوى الكاذبة العريضة، فلا مريد صادق ثابت القدم في سلوكه، ولا شيخ محقق ينصحه فيخرجه من رعونة نفسه وإعجابه برأيه ويعزب لخ عن طريق الحق، فالمريد يدعي الشيخوخة والرياسة، هذا كله تخبيط وتلبيس. (ص ٥)

This era is filled with long drawn out claims. Neither do we see any murīd who is genuine and firm in the path, nor a shaykh who is firmly established to advise his murīd, and to remove him from his frivolity and egotism, and to lay open the true path before him. Consequently, the murīd claims seniority and greatness. All this is nothing but insanity and deception.

We learn from the above that after traversing the entire journey, the first obstacle which a seeker encounters is his claim to excellence and ostentation. This stems from an absence of sincerity and non-

rectification of this self. As long as this is not abandoned, he will not succeed. Understand this well.

Abandoning worship because of not experiencing sweetness in it

We also get some immature people who, when they do not experience any sweetness and joy in their worship, they abandon it. The author of *Rūh al-Maʿānī* says with reference to such people:

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا ج فَلَمَّآ أَضَآءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللّٰهُ بِنُوْرِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِيْ ظُلُمٰتٍ لَّا يُبْصِرُوْنَ.

Their likeness is similar to that person who kindled a fire. Then when the fire lit up all that was around him, Allāh took away their light and left them in utter darkness (where) they could not see anything.[1]

Just as this person and his companions were left in the dark after having got some light, the hypocrites fell into darkness and misguidance after the truth was clear to them. Just as the eyes, ears and tongues of these people who kindled the fire were rendered useless when they fell into darkness and misguidance, their condition became as described below:

صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُوْنَ

They are deaf, dumb and blind; so they will not return [to the straight path].[2]

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 17.
[2] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 18.

(ومن البطون القرآنية التي ذكرها ساداتنا الصوفية نفعنا الله تعالى بهم) أن الآية مثل من دخل طريقة الأولياء بالتقليد لا بالتحقيق فعمل عمل الظاهر وما وجد حلاوة الباطن فترك الأعمال بعد فقدان الأحوال.[1]

From among the Qur'ānic mysteries which our Sufi seniors mentioned is that the verse contains an example of the one who enters the path of the auliyā' through blind following and not through investigation. He then only acted on the external actions due to which he did not experience internal sweetness. This is why he gave up external actions altogether. How, then, will he be able to enjoy internal spiritual fruits and results!?

The author of *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* then writes:

وقال أبو الحسن الوراق هذا مثل ضربه الله تعالى لمن لم يصحح أحوال الإرادة فارتقى من تلك الأحوال بالدعاوى إلى أحوال الأكابر، فكان يضيء عليه أحوال إرادة لو صححها بملازمة آدابها، فلما مزجها بادعاوى أذهب الله تعالى عنه تلك الأنوار وبقي في ظلمات دعاويه لا يبصر طريق الخروج منها، نسأل الله تعالى العفو والعافية، ونعوذ به من الحور بعد الكور.[2]

Abul Ḥasan al-Warrāq raḥimahullāh said: This is an example of a person who did not even rectify the

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[1] روح المعاني، ج ١، ص ١٦٨.

[2] روح المعاني، ج ١، ص ١٦٨.

conditions of will. Subsequently, he reached the conditions of the seniors through claims. The conditions of will would have been illuminated to him had he rectified them by adhering to their etiquette. However, when he adulterated them with claims, Allāh taʿālā took away that effulgence from him and he was left in the darkness of his claims, unable to find an exit from it. We beg Allāh taʿālā for pardon and wellness, and we seek refuge in Him from loss after having experienced success.[1]

The following is stated in *Sirāṭ Mustaqīm*:

> A major reason why a seeker is deprived of divine blessings and favours is the evil qualities of his animalistic self, e.g. miserliness, jealousy, pride, devouring unlawful wealth, backbiting, lying, slandering, ostentation, greed, avarice and so on. The pious predecessors considered the purification of these evils to be of foremost importance. They used to remove these qualities from their hearts solely for Allāh's pleasure and uproot them completely so that no trace remains, and their hearts are totally purified. This is why they become eligible for Allāh's limitless favours. It is by virtue of the purification of their hearts which they did solely for Allāh's pleasure that they used to be accepted by the Creator and the creation.
>
> When a person traverses the different levels of sulūk and still does not receive Allāh's favours, we can conclude that the

[1] *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī*, vol. 1, p. 168.

effects of all those evil qualities or some of them are still in his heart. The presence of these are obstacles to the descent of Allāh's favours.[1]

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ismāʿīl Shahīd Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* states that the presence of evil qualities are obstacles to divine blessings and favours. This is why the seniors of the past considered the purification of character to be of foremost importance. They also state that a person may have followed the path prescribed by the seniors, but if all or some of the evils still remain within him, the path will not open fully to him.

Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh* says that as long as character is not rectified, a person does not even develop the capability of acquiring affinity with Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* said: From what I understand, the reason for this is that from among the evil qualities, pride, jealousy, anger, greed and avarice, ostentation, and claims to excellence are the "mother of all illnesses". They are either from Shaytān or belong to the unbelievers – both of whom have earned Allāh's wrath. Thus, if a person has the qualities of those who earned Allāh's wrath, how can he become a beloved of Allāh *taʿālā*? This is why it is extremely important and most essential to remove these evil qualities – especially claims to excellence – and to focus on the rectification of character. Understand this well. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

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[1] *Sirāt Mustaqīm*, p. 67.

Hadrat Maulānā Rūm *raḥimahullāh* makes reference to this as follows:

> That person who makes claims to excellence about himself is deprived of Allāh's proximity and acceptance in His court.

He also makes reference to the opposite in the following couplet:

> The person who sees his own defects has in fact hastened and rushed towards Allāh *taʿālā*.

Giving up egotism is the way to proximity

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib Nānautwī *raḥimahullāh* was the head teacher at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. He writes a most important point in one of his letters:

> The essence of the path of proximity [to Allāh *taʿālā*] is to give up egotism. The treatment for it is as described in *Minhāj al-ʿĀbidīn*. The latter Sufi masters prescribe abundant dhikr, eating less, sleeping less, speaking less and intermingling less with people. The source of this is that through abundant dhikr, everything is cleansed at once.[1]

Love – an easy way to give up egotism

I think that love is the easiest and quickest route to giving up egotism. Through striving and rectifying the small ailments of the self, the self can be overpowered to a certain extent. However, the self

[1] *Yaʿqūbīyyah*, p. 11.

does not die as long as it does not pass through the phase of love. Maulānā Rūm *raḥimahullāh* says in this regard:

> The one whose garment is pierced by love
> is totally purified of greed and all other
> defects.

Thus, we see that love is the way to remove greed and other evil qualities. There is still the contention whether all the evils of the self come to an end or whether it is overpowered and made subservient, due to which it cannot act on its demands. Nonetheless, the capabilities of the evil qualities remain inside because they are its intrinsic elements, and we know that intrinsic elements cannot be separated from the source.

At this point, I recall a very beautiful example given by Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Ṣāḥib Nānautwī *raḥimahullāh*. Allāh *taʿālā* had blessed him with knowledge and sciences of this nature. He says: The quality of coolness is an intrinsic quality in water and can never be separated from it. So much so that if you were to boil it to the point that if it is poured on your body it will burn you, yet if you pour that same boiling water over a fire it will extinguish it. The reason for this is that the heat which we see is temporary. It is acting like fire on our bodies but its intrinsic quality of coolness is still found in it. This is why it extinguished the fire. The same can be said about the self. It develops such capabilities through the heat of love, that it does not act against the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā*. As for whether the power of opposition [not acting against the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā*] no longer remaining in it, this is not necessary, and is not even detrimental to us. If water maintains its intrinsic quality of coolness even after

heating it, let it be so because its temporary heat is sufficient for our cooking needs. Why, then, should we bother about why coolness is to be found in its essence?

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* says: Whether love results in the complete termination of the self or the termination of its demands, either of the two are sufficient for the realization of our objective. I was saying to you that love is an easy and quick path to putting an end to the egotism of the self. This is what the seniors of Dīn have been constantly saying. The reason for this is that when love becomes perfect, it leaves no place in the heart for anything besides the Beloved. This is what is gauged from the statements of the spiritual masters. I have rarely come across an explanation of this theme as good as that of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yaʿqūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He says:

> The essence of love is for the lover to obliterate himself before the beloved and to lose all desires. If not, the love is defective and the beloved will be part of the desires and not the objective of love.[1]

Glory to Allāh! What a beautiful and excellent way of explaining love. That is, the lover becomes obliterated before the beloved. This can also be referred to as abandoning egotism. Egotism is also an obstacle which, if removed, a person will be successful. Hadrat Hāfiz *rahimahullāh* says in a couplet:

> There is no obstacle between the lover and the beloved apart from egotism of the

[1] *Yaʿqūbīyyah*, p. 14.

> lover. O Hāfiz! You too must remove your egotism.

This obstacle will not be removed without first developing love. How is this love acquired? Understand well that there is nothing greater than the company of the people of love. This includes remembering love to such an extent that the person starts loving love itself. Man has to have love for love first, and then he develops love for the beloved. A poet rightly said:

> O grief of love! Why are you standing at the door? O my beloved! O my brother! Come in.

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat's statements on tasawwuf

The essence of the path

1. This is the only way of reaching Allāh *taʿālā*, viz. blameworthy characteristics must be removed, praiseworthy characteristics must be developed, sins must be given up, one must be inspired towards acts of obedience, negligence and heedlessness with regard to Allāh *taʿālā* must depart, and turning towards Allāh *taʿālā* must be developed.[1]

2. On many occasions I said to the students and masses to become firm on two things, and I guarantee they will reach Allāh *taʿālā*. One is to abstain from sin. The other is to speak less and to go into a little seclusion for dhikr and reflection.[2]

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[1] *Kamālāt Ashrafiyyah*, p. 177.
[2] *Kamālāt Ashrafiyyah*, p. 177.

The objective of sulūk

3. The objective of sulūk is Allāh's pleasure. After that, two things are necessary, viz. knowledge of the path and practising on it. The path is one, i.e. adhering to external and internal injunctions. There are two things which would aid a person on this path: (1) dhikr which a person can engage in regularly, (2) company of the men of Allāh as much as possible. If a person does not have sufficient time for the latter, reading and studying the lives and statements of the seniors is an alternative. Two things are obstacles on the path or prevent one from realizing the objective, viz. sins and preoccupation in futile activities.

After that, it depends on each person's capabilities. These will determine how quickly or how long it will take him to realize the objective. This is the gist of the path.[1]

An explanation of Sharīʿat, ṯarīqat and ḥaqīqat

In his *Makātīb Rashīdīyyah*, Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī *raḥimahullāh* explains this to a seeker in the following manner:

> In reality, the Sharīʿat is obligatory and the fundamental objective. The ṯarīqat is the internal Sharīʿat. And ḥaqīqat and maʿrifat complete and perfect the Sharīʿat. Total following of the Sharīʿat cannot be realized without maʿrifat.[2]

He explains the objective of sulūk in a very comprehensive manner:

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[1] *Kamālāt Ashrafīyyah*.
[2] *Makātīb Rashīdīyyah*, p. 24.

> The sum objective of sulūk is to have an aversion for sins and a yearning for obedience. Spiritual conditions, restlessness and so on are not the objectives. A servant is a servant on account of servitude, not because of restlessness.[1]

I now quote the statement of Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* on the subject of affinity, and his approval – in fact, preference – of those who possess it. He writes:

والذي نفسي بيده هذا الثالث أدق المقاصد الشرعية مأخذا، وأعمقها محتدا بالنسبة إلى سائر الشرائع، وبمنزلة الروح من الجسد، وبمنزلة المعنى من اللفظ، وتكفل بها الصوفية رضوان الله عليهم، فاهتدوا وهدوا، واستقوا وسقوا، وفازوا بالسعادة القصوى وجازوا السهم الأعلى.[2]

I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life. This third point is the most intricate of the objectives of the Sharī'ah as regards its source, the deepest as regards its origin, it is like the soul in the body and the meaning to the word. The Sufis – may Allāh be pleased with them - took responsibility for it. Consequently, they were guided and they guided others, they drank of it and made others to drink. In this way they acquired the greatest fortune and the largest share.

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[1] *Makātīb Rashīdīyyah*, p. 94.

[2] تفهيمات الهية، ج ١، ص ١٣.

Look at the powerful statement of Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* on the subject of Allāh consciousness and how he praised those who were devoted to it! He refers to this objective as the deepest and most intricate because it is the soul of everything else. Anything which has this quality is always the most intricate. I do not think that the need for tasawwuf can be explained in a better way. Just as fiqh is considered to be the most intricate, the deepest and the most complex of external sciences; in like manner Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* refers to internal fiqh – Allāh consciousness and sincerity – to be the most intricate and most complex.[1]

Note: All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* the honourable ʿulamā' and jurists are fulfilling their responsibilities in today's times as well. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them for their efforts and bless them with more inspiration. However, we are certainly found wanting in the third important service to Dīn which the genuine Sufis have shouldered. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to atone for it and inspire us to fulfil this responsibility. Āmīn. (compiler)

Explanation of tasawwuf

Some scholars define tasawwuf as character and ethics. Others say:

النسبة مع الحق والشفقة على الخلق

It refers to affiliation with Allāh taʿālā and affection towards the creation.

One point which has to be borne in mind is that it is not essential to resort to softness and leniency in

[1] *Ta'līfāt Muslihul Ummat*, vol. 4, p. 111.

every situation related to the truth. Rather, there are times when adopting the opposite approach is unavoidable.

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to quote the following text on the subject of character:

اعلم أن حسن الخلق هو معاملتك مع كل أحد بما يسره إلا فيما يخالف الشرع.

Good character refers to your interaction with every person in a manner which brings joy to the person except in matters which are against the Sharīʿah.[1]

We learn from this that there are times for leniency and harshness when enjoining good and forbidding evil. A person must resort to his understanding when deciding what course of action to take. If he is confused about a certain matter, it will be necessary for him to resort to leniency. It is therefore incorrect to say that there is nothing but leniency in tasawwuf. The fact of the matter is that when an action is against the Sharīʿat, then it is essential to adopt harshness. In fact, this harshness in itself is an act of leniency and good character. Understand this well.

Differentiating between occasions of leniency and harshness

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* would constantly quote the following statement of Hadrat Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh*:

[1] *Maʿārif Sūfiyyah*, p. 52.

والحاجة إلى العنف قد تقع ولكن على الندور، إنما الكمال من يميز مواقع الرفق عن مواقع العنف، فيعطي كل امرئ حقه، فإن كان قاصر البصيرة وأشكل عليه...حكم واقعة من الوقائع فليكن ميله إلى الرفق، فإن النجاح معه في الأكثر.[1]

There are rare occasions when harshness is needed. An expert is one who can differentiate between the occasions of leniency and harshness, and accords to each person his due. If the person is short-sighted or finds it difficult to decide on a matter, he should incline towards leniency because there is more likelihood of success in it.

Salvation depends on actions

The following is stated in *Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm*:

أما بعد. رحي النجاة تدور على الأعمال ولا يعتد بالأعمال إلا بالمواظبة عليها وعلى حقوقها، وهو المرابطة ولا يتم هذه المواظبة والمرابطة إلا بإلزام النفس الأعمال.

أولًا وهو المشارطة – ثم ملاحظة هذه المشارطة كل وقت.

ثانيًا وهو المراقبة. ثم الإحتساب على النفس في وقت خاص إنها وقت الشرط أم لا.

ثالثا وهو المحاسبة. ثم علاجها بمشقة تصلحها به إذا لم تف بالشرط.

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[1] إحياء العلوم، ج ٣، ص ١٨٦.

رابعا وهو المعاقبة. ثم تأديبها بفنون من الوظائف الثقيلة جبرا لما فات منها إذا راٰها توانت.

خامسا وهو المجاهدة. ثم توبيخها والعذل عليها إذا استعصت وحملها عليها.

سادسا وهو المعاتبة. ويرجع الجميع إلى عدم إهمالها لحظة فتجمح وتشرد.

Salvation revolves around actions. Actions are only considered when a person is consistent in carrying them out and in fulfilling their rights. This is also known as murābaṯah. Consistency is only complete when the self is imposed to carry out actions. (In other words, to make this condition on the self that it will have to do these things). This is known as mushāraṯah. The next step is to be conscious of mushāraṯah all the time (and not to allow the self to become lax in carrying out actions). This is known as murāqabah. The third step is to set aside a time in which a person takes stock of his self as regards its actions and to check whether it fulfilled its condition or not. This is known as muḥāsabah. The fourth step is that if he finds his self to have fallen short in fulfilling its condition, he must impose appropriate hardship on it to rectify it so that it carries out its tasks with renewed energy. This is known as muʿāqabah. The fifth step is that when he sees that his self is lazy and has become lax, he must punish it through different forms of striving and devotions so that he can make up for what has passed. This is known as mujāhadah. The sixth step is that if his self becomes overwhelmed by the heavy forms of striving, he must

reprimand and castigate it, and put it on the path by making it feel ashamed. He must put it back into action in whatever harsh or lenient way he can. This is known as muʿātabah. The crux of all this is that the self must not be left idle for a single moment or else it will find an opportunity to become rebellious.

The ummat can experience life of the heart only by practising on the Qur'ān

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

إن الله يرفع بهذا الكتاب أقواما ويضع به آخرين[1]

Allāh taʿālā elevates certain people through this Book and debases others through it.

The author of *Mirqāt*, Hadrat Mullā ʿAlī Qārī *rahimahullāh* provides a most beautiful explanation of the above Hadīth. It ought to be embedded in our hearts. It reads as follows:

Allāh *taʿālā* will elevate some people through this Book, i.e. those who believe in it, honour and respect it, and practise on its injunctions. Allāh *taʿālā* will debase other people on account of the very same Book. The fortunate ones will be conferred with high ranks in Dīn and in their worldly matters on account of the Qur'ān. In this world they will be blessed with a wholesome life, and in the Hereafter they will be included with those whom Allāh *taʿālā* favoured. As for those who are not like them, they will be toppled from the high levels and dropped to the lowest of the low. Allāh *taʿālā* says that He leads astray many people through the Qur'ān and gives guidance to

[1] رواه مسلم، مشكوة: ص ١٨٤.

many through it. The Qur'ān is like sweet water for the beloved ones (they are quenched through it) while it is blood for those who are deprived. They are destroyed on account of it. Allāh *taʿālā* says: We have revealed in the Qur'ān that which is a cure and mercy for the believers, and a cause of loss for the wrongdoers. ʿAllāmah Ṭībī *raḥimahullāh* says that the person who reads the Qur'ān and practises on it with devotion will be rewarded with loftiness by Allāh *taʿālā*. As for the one who reads it merely to show off and does not practise on it, Allāh *taʿālā* will debase him.[1]

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* explains the same Hadīth as follows:

We learn from this Hadīth that the Qur'ān has both qualities. A person who believes in it, respects it and recites it is honoured and elevated. In the same way, the one who does not believe in it, does not respect it and does not recite it is debased and disgraced. Today we see ourselves disgraced and humiliated throughout the world. It is not because of others. Rather we are the cause. We cut off our ties with the Qur'ān, we do not respect and honour it, we do not read it, and we feel that we are not in need of practising on it. Consequently, the Book of Allāh is also displeased and has deprived us of its blessings. Disgrace and humiliation have become an intrinsic part of our condition. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Note: This is a most admonitory and enlightening explanation by Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *raḥimahullāh*. Those who are associated with him ought to make this a part and parcel of their lives.

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[1] *Mirqāt*, vol. 5, p. 12.

May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards. Āmīn. (compiler)

Genuine happiness is confined to following the Sunnat

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

عليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين، تمسكوا بها وعضوا عليها بالنواجذ.[1]

Adhere to my Sunnat and the Sunnat of the rightly-guided caliphs. Hold on firmly to it with all your might.

In his explanation of the above Hadīth, Hadrat Mullā ʿAlī Qārī *rahimahullāh* expounds on the effects of following the Sunnat. It reads as follows:

لأن تحصيل السعادات الحقيقية بعد مجانبة كل صاحب يفسد الوقت، وكل سبب يفتن القلب منُوط باتباع السنة بأن يمتثل الأمرَ على مشاهدة الإخلاص، ويَعْظِم النهيَ على مشاهدة الخوف، بل باكتفاء آثار الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم في جميع موارده ومصادره وحركاته وسكناته ويقظته ومنامه حتى يلجم النفس بلجام الشريعة ويتجلى في القلب حقائق الحقيقة بتفصيله من مفاتح الأخلاق وتنويره بأنوار الذكر والمعرفة والوفاق وتعديله بإجراء جميع حركات الجوارح على قانون العدل حتى يحدث فيه هيئة عادلة مسنونة من آثار الفضل

[1] مشكوة، ص ٣٠.

يستعد لقبول المعارف والحقائق ويصلح أن ينفخ فيه روح الله المخصوص بسلاك أحسن الطرائق.[1]

The realization of true happiness is confined to following the Sunnat. Total following of the Sunnat will only happen when a person remains aloof from every such companion who wastes time, and every such cause which casts a person into tribulations. He must carry out orders with devotion, and – with fear within him – he must consider the prohibitions to be extremely dangerous. He must follow in the footsteps of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam in walking, sitting, residing, travelling, moving around, moments of inactivity, wakefulness, sleeping and so on. He must rein his carnal self with the rein of the Sharīʿat and polish his heart with lofty character to the extent that the realities become luminous in the heart. And the heart becomes embellished and enlightened with the light of dhikr, recognition and inspiration. Every movement of his must be totally and completely balanced in line with the law of justice. A balanced prescribed form must be developed in him through the effects of virtue. And through these, he must develop the capability of accepting the facts and realities. In this way, he must be able to receive the special spirit of those who have traversed the path of sulūk in the best manner.

In his explanation to the above text, Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* writes:

"The realization of true happiness is confined to following the Sunnat." We can rephrase this and say: The realization of wellness in both worlds is

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[1] مرقاة المفاتيح، ج ١، ص ٣٧٤.

dependent on following the Sunnat. A person will experience spiritual and physical health, wellbeing, and true life of the heart if he is particular about following the Sunnat.

Happiness through following the Sunnat will be acquired when a person keeps away from the company of a person who wastes time, and remains aloof from all such causes which cause confusion and uncertainty in the heart. A person rightly said:

> As far as possible, remain far from an evil companion because he is more harmful and more destructive than the worst of snakes.[1]

Corruption of the heart and wasting time

Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Aḥmad Yār Ṣāḥib lists ten things from which no benefit is derived. They are:

وبعد! وددت أن أذكركم ونفسي بعشرة أشياء ضائعة لا ينتفع بها:

١. علم لا يعمل به.

٢. وعمل لا إخلاص فيه ولا اقتداء.

٣. ومال لا ينفق منه، فلا يستمتع به جامعه في الدنيا ولا يقدمه أمامه إلى الآخرة.

٤. وقلب فارغ من محبة الله والشوق إليه والأنس به.

٥. وبدن معطل من طاعته وخدمته.

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[1] *Ta'līfāt Muṣliḥul Ummat*, vol. 3, p. 320.

٦. ومحبة لا تتقيد برضاء المحبوب وامتثال أوامره.

٧. ووقت معطل عن استدراك فارط واغتنام بر وقربة.

٨. وفكر يجول فيما لا ينفع.

٩. وخدمة من لا تقربك خدمته إلى الله ولا تعود عليك بصلاح دنياك.

١٠. وخوفك ورجاؤك لمن ناصيته بيد الله وهو أسير في قبضته ولا يملك لنفسه ضرا ولا نفعا ولا موتا ولا حياة ولا نشورا.[1]

I would like to remind you and myself of ten destructive things from which no benefit is derived:

1. Knowledge which is not practised.

2. Practice in which there is no sincerity.

3. Wealth which is not spent. The one who accumulates it neither enjoys it himself in this world, nor does he send it forward for his Hereafter.

4. A heart which is devoid of Allāh's love, yearning for Him and affinity with Him.

5. A body which is "paralysed" from obeying Allāh ta'ālā and serving Him.

6. Love which is not restricted by the pleasure of the Beloved and carrying out His orders.

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[1] مجلة المدرسة الصولتية: سنة ١٤٣٥هـ.

7. Time which is devoid of sending reward for the future, or acquiring piety and closeness [to Allāh ta'ālā].

8. A mind which thinks about things in which there is no benefit.

9. Serving someone whose service will not take you closer to Allāh ta'ālā and will not bring any goodness to your worldly matters.

10. Your fearing and having hope in someone who is under Allāh's control, who is His prisoner, and who does not have the power to harm, benefit, cause death, and give life after death to even his own self.[1]

Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Aḥmad Yār Sāḥib writes further on:

وأعظم هذه الإضاعات إضاعتان هما أصل كل إضاعة، إضاعة القلب وإضاعة الوقت، فإضاعة القلب من إيثار الدنيا إلى الآخرة، وإضاعة الوقت من طول الأمل، فاجتمع الفساد كله في اتباع الهوى وطول الأمل، والصلاح كله في اتباع الهدى والاستعداد للقاء، والله المستعان.

The biggest of the above "time-wasters" are two. They are the cause of all the others. Wasting of the heart and wasting of time. Wasting of the heart entails giving preference to this world over the Hereafter. Wasting of time entails have long hopes and wishes. All corruption revolves around following one's desires and long hopes. Rectitude entirely revolves around following guidance and making preparations to meet Allāh ta'ālā. Help ought to be sought from Allāh ta'ālā alone.

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[1] *Majallah al-Madrasah as-Saulatiyah*, 1435 A.H.

Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Aḥmad Yār Sāḥib then makes a very comprehensive supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْزُقْنَا مَحَبَّتَكَ وَطَاعَتَكَ وَرِضَاكَ وَجَنَّتَكَ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ، وَارْزُقْنَا مَحَبَّةَ رَسُوْلِكَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَطَاعَتَهُ وَتَصْدِيْقَهُ وَالْإِقْتِدَاءَ بِهِ فِيْ كُلِّ حَالٍ وَثَبِّتْنَا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ عَلٰى سُنَّتِهِ فِيْ الْحَالِ وَالْمَآلِ، وَاحْشُرْنَا فِيْ زُمْرَتِهِ، وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِيْ شَفَاعَتِهِمْ وَأَوْرِدْنَا عَلٰى حَوْضِهِ الْعَذْبِ الشَّهِيِّ الزُّلَالِ، وَوَالِدِيْنَا وَأَزْوَاجَنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا وَالْمُسْلِمِيْنَ، إِنَّكَ يَا رَبَّنَا عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ، وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا وَعَلٰى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِيْنَ.[1]

O Allāh! Bless us with Your love, obedience, pleasure and Paradise. O You who are all-mighty, most generous. Bless us with love for Your Messenger Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam, obedience to him, affirmation of him, and following him in every situation and condition. Keep us steadfast with the true word on his Sunnat in this world and the Hereafter. Raise us with his group, admit us in his intercession, and enable us to drink from his fountain of sweet and quenching water. And also our parents, our spouses, our children and all Muslims. O our Allāh! You have power over everything. Salutations to our master Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam, his family and his companions.[2]

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[1] مجلة المدرسة الصولتية، سنة ١٤٣٥هـ.

[2] *Majallah al-Madrasah aṣ-Ṣaulatiyah*, 1435 A.H.

Humility and submission in the heart is life for the heart

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself made a general duʿā' for humility. He said:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَحْيِنِيْ مِسْكِيْنًا وَّاَمِتْنِيْ مِسْكِيْنًا، وَّاحْشُرْنِيْ فِيْ زُمْرَةِ الْمَسَاكِيْنَ.

O Allāh! Let me live as a humble person, let me die as a humble person, and raise me among the group of humble people.

وسئل الشيخ زكريا عن معنى هذا الحديث فقال معناه طلب التواضع والخضوع، وأن لا يكون من الجبابرة والمتكبرين والأغنياء المترفين، ومنه أخذ السبكي قوله المراد استكانة القلب لا المسكنة التي هي من الفقر، فإنه أغنى الناس بالله.[1]

Shaykh Zakarīyyā rahimahullāh was asked about the meaning of this Hadīth. He said: It means that the person is asking Allāh taʿālā for humbleness and submission, and not to make him from among the tyrants, proud ones, and wasteful and extravagant wealthy people. ʿAllāmah Subkī rahimahullāh says that it also refers to the submissiveness of the heart. He says that the maskanat in this Hadīth does not refer to poverty because Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam was the wealthiest of people by the grace of Allāh taʿālā.

Note: We should make it a habit of making this duʿā' of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

[1] فيض القدير، ج ٢، ص ١٠٢.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَحْيِنِيْ مِسْكِيْنًا وَّاَمِتْنِيْ مِسْكِيْنًا، وَّاحْشُرْنِيْ فِيْ زُمْرَةِ الْمَسَاكِيْنَ.

O Allāh! Let me live as a humble person, let me die as a humble person, and raise me among the group of humble people.

The desirability of a living heart

Hadrat ʿAllāmah Ibn Taymīyyah *rahimahullāh* used to say that the one who regularly reads the following 40 times between the Sunnat and fard of the fajr salāh will be blessed with a living heart and his heart will not die.

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ، لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ

There seems to be no harm if the following words are added to the above:

بِرَحْمَتِكَ اَسْتَغِيْثُ

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an easy prescription for acquiring a living heart. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to practise. Āmīn. (compiler)

The importance of a living heart

عن أبي أمامة رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال من قام ليلتي العيدين محتسبا لم يمت قلبه يوم تموت القلوب. (ابن ماجة)

Hadrat Abū Umāmah radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: If a person spends the two nights of ʿīd in worship solely for reward from Allāh taʿālā, his heart will not die on

the terrifying day of the Resurrection when hearts will die (out of fear).”

A sound heart

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَّلَا بَنُوْنَ، إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيْمٍ.

The day when neither wealth nor children will be of any use. Except he who comes to Allāh with a sound heart.[1]

The author of *Rūh̲ al-Maʿānī* gives five meanings for a sound heart:

١. الذين ينفق ماله في سبيل البر.

٢. الذي يرشد بنيه إلى الحق.

٣. الذي يكون خاليا من العقائد الباطلة، أي من الكفر والشرك والبدعة.

٤. الذي يكون خاليا من الشهوات التي تؤدي إلى النار.

٥. الذي ليس فيه غير الله.[2]

1. The one who spends his wealth in good works.

2. The one who steers his children towards the truth.

3. The one who is free from false beliefs, i.e. from unbelief, polytheism and innovations.

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[1] Sūrah ash-Shuʿarā’, 26: 88-89.

[2] روح المعاني، ج ١، ص ١٠١.

4. The one who is free from desires which lead him towards the Hell-fire.

5. The one who has nothing apart from Allāh taʿālā in him.[1]

A pure clean heart is most beloved to Allāh

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: ألا وإن لله أواني في أرضه وهي القلوب، فأحب الأواني إلى الله تعالى أصفاها وأصلبها وأرقها. أصفاها من الذنوب، وأصلبها في الدين، وأرقها على الإخوان.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Listen! Allāh has certain utensils in His earth, they are the hearts. The most beloved utensils (hearts) in the sight of Allāh are those which are purest from sins, most firm in matters of Dīn, and softest towards their fellow brethren.

Note: What an important Hadīth! Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* referred to the hearts as Allāh's utensils and encouraged towards their purity and cleanliness in order for them to be loved by Allāh *taʿālā*. This proves the importance of rectifying and straightening the heart. Unfortunately there is general negligence in this regard. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

Four types of hearts

Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* relates a Hadīth which explains four types of hearts. It reads as follows:

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[1] *Rūh al-Maʿānī*, vol. 1, p. 101.

عن أبي سعيد رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم القلوب أربعة (١) قلب أجرد فيه مثل السراج يزهر، (٢) وقلب أغلف مربوط على غلافه، (٣) وقلب منكوس، (٤) وقلب مصفح. فأما القلب الأجرد فقلب المؤمن سراجه فيه نوره. وأما القلب الأغلف فقلب الكافر. وأما المنكوس فقلب المنافق عرف ثم أنكر. وأما القلب المصفح فقلب الإيمان فيه كمثل البقلة يمدها الماء الطيب. ومثل النفاق فيه كمثل القرحة يمدها القيح والدم. فأي المادتين غلبت على الأخرى غلبت عليه.[1]

Hadrat Abū Saʿīd radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: There are four types of hearts: (1) A heart which is ajrad – like a barren field in which a lamp is lit. (2) A heart which is aghlaf – covered by a sort of covering. (3) A heart which is mankūs. (4) A heart which is musaffah. The ajrad heart is the heart of a believer, and the lamp which is in it is his light. The aghlaf heart is the heart of an unbeliever. The mankūs heart is the heart of a hypocrite – he recognized the truth and then rejected it. The musaffah heart is the one in which there is īmān and hypocrisy. The īmān which is in such a heart is like greenery which grows with water. The hypocrisy in it is like a boil which increases in size with pus and blood. The person will be categorized depending on whichever of the two ingredients become more.[2]

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[1] المسند لأحمد، ج ٣، ص ٧١.

[2] Hadrat Muslihul Ummat: *Tahdhīr al-'Ulamā'.*

Ahlesunnah Library [ahlesunnah.wordpress.com]

Note: The heart in which a lamp is shining brightly will obviously be referred to as a living heart. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with an effulgent heart. Āmīn. (compiler)

QUOTATIONS FROM SHIFĀ'-E-DIL

Categories of hearts

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُوْلاً

Surely the ears, the eyes and the heart – all of them – will be questioned thereof.[1]

The rank of the heart over the other body parts is like that of a king over his army. All matters and affairs are decided by him. The heart instructs the body parts as it wants and they all remain in its obedience. It is through the heart that the body parts find the paths of steadfastness and deviation. Solutions to all complexities and problems are found by following and obeying the heart. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

ألا إن في الجسد لمضغة إذا صلحت صلح الجسد كله، وإذا فسدت فسد الجسد كله، ألا وهي القلب. (متفق عليه)

Remember! There is a piece of flesh in the human body. If it is sound, the entire body is sound. If it is unsound, the entire body becomes unsound. Understand well! It is the heart.

The fact of the matter is that the heart is really the king of all the body parts; they carry out whatever order it issues, and accept every gift which comes from it. It is through the focus of the heart that the body parts find steadfastness and the correct path. The heart is the one which is responsible for Dīn, and

[1] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 36.

the one which is accountable. Every guardian or supervisor will be questioned about his subjects. This is why the seekers of the path consider the setting right and rectifying of the heart to be the most superior task. Those who engage in worship and spiritual exercises accord a lot of importance to pondering over its ailments and their treatment.

A heart can be dead or living

There are three categories as regards the life and death of hearts: (1) a sound or living heart, (2) a dead heart, (3) a sick heart.

A sound heart

Only a person who comes with a sound heart on the day of Resurrection will receive salvation. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَّلَا بَنُوْنَ، إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيْمٍ.

The day when neither wealth nor children will be of any use. Except he who comes to Allāh with a sound heart.[1]

A sound heart is also defined as one which is pure from every desire which is against Allāh's order and prohibition, and every doubt which is in conflict with Allāh's order. It is never pleased with servitude to anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* and acting contrary to the decisions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Its worship and servitude are solely and purely for Allāh *taʿālā*. It has conviction in Allāh *taʿālā* alone and love only for Him. Its reliance is solely on Allāh *taʿālā* and it turns to Him alone. It

[1] Sūrah ash-Shuʿarā', 26: 88-89.

has fear for Him alone and pins its hopes only on Him. All its actions are resplendent with sincerity and devotion. When it loves someone, it is solely for Allāh's sake. When it dislikes someone, it is expressly for Allāh *taʿālā*. When it gives, it gives for Allāh's sake. When it refuses, it refuses solely for Allāh *taʿālā*. These points are not enough for it. Rather, apart from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, it is free from submitting to the decision of any other person. It is prepared to practise solely on Dīn with full determination and resoluteness, and has rejected the statements and actions of others. It does not have the desire to put forward the belief and view of anyone if it is against Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُقَدِّمُوْا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ.

O believers! Do not be forward in the presence of Allāh and His Messenger. Continue fearing Allāh. Surely Allāh is all-hearing, all-knowing.[1]

A dead heart

This is the exact opposite of a sound heart. It has no recognition of its Creator. It abstains from His worship despite His command. It has no interest in Allāh's love and pleasure. It remains immersed and drowning in worldly enjoyments and comforts despite Allāh's anger and displeasure. It disregards Allāh's order for the slightest worldly profit irrespective of whether Allāh *taʿālā* is pleased or displeased. It

[1] Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 1.

remains occupied in worshipping others apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. If it loves anyone, it does so for its own self. If it hates anyone, it is for its own self. If it gives to anyone, it gives for its own benefit. If it refuses to give, it is for its own self. Its self becomes the most superior thing to it, and it has more love for its self than it has for Allāh *taʿālā*. The self becomes its imām, carnal desire is its guide, ignorance is its commander, and heedlessness is its conveyance. It is fully immersed with realizing worldly objectives and motives with its life, heart and thoughts. It remains intoxicated and mad in its love for worldly goods and the desires of its self. It is addressed from every near and distant place, and called towards Allāh and the Hereafter, but it does not lend an ear to any well-wisher. Instead, it runs behind every rebellious devil, and the world itself is its criterion for pleasure and displeasure. His carnal self makes it blind and deaf to everything else apart from falsehood. Thus, keeping the company of such people and living in their society is synonymous to consuming poison, and is from among the causes of destruction.

A sick heart

A sick heart contains elements of life and illness, each element pulling it towards itself. When one overpowers the other, it results in qualities such as Allāh's love, belief and conviction in Him, devotion to Him and reliance in Him. These are from the causes of its life. When the other element gains the upper hand, it results in love for desires, preference to this world over the Hereafter, greed for worldly acquisitions, jealousy, pride, egotism and so on. These are from the causes of its destruction. This heart is surrounded by the demands and pulls of these two opposing elements. One calls it towards

Allāh *taʿālā*, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the Hereafter. The other calls it towards the world and this temporary life. Depending on its personal temperament and inclination, it accepts the invitation of either of the two.

The first heart is filled with life, humble, soft and perceptive. The second heart is devoid of life, extremely dry and lifeless. The third heart is a sick heart – it is either close to peace and security, or on the verge of destruction. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Signs of healthy and vibrant hearts

One sign is that it departs from this world and settles down in the Hereafter. It lives there as though it is one of its residents. It then returns to the world of travel – this world – takes its necessary provisions and goes back. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "O son of ʿUmar! Live in this world like a stranger or one who is crossing the path."[1]

The sicker the heart the more preference it gives to the world. It considers the world to be its homeland to the extent that it is included among its people.

The sign of a healthy heart is that it constantly warns man so that he is blessed with turning to Allāh *taʿālā*, submits before Him, and develops a bond with Him like the deep love which one has with one's beloved. After acquiring Allāh's love, His remembrance and serving Him; the person becomes independent of the love of everyone else, the

[1] Bukhārī.

remembrance of others, and the need to serve anyone else.

Another sign of a healthy heart is that if it misses a certain act of worship or devotion, it becomes far more saddened and grieved than a greedy and avaricious person is grief-stricken by the loss of his wealth and property.

Another sign of a healthy heart is that it is intensely desirous of Allāh's worship like a hungry person who is desirous of food and drink. Hadrat Yahyā ibn Muʿādh *rahimahullāh* said: When a person experiences joy and happiness in worshipping Allāh *taʿālā*, all people will experience joy and happiness at serving such a person. The one whose eyes experience coolness at Allāh' remembrance, all eyes will experience coolness when they look at him. (In other words, the general public will be happy in serving and visiting such a person, and will consider it to be an honour. This is clearly seen with the pious elders).

A sign of a healthy heart is that all its concerns are severed and they become focused on just one concern, viz. Allāh and His worship.

Another sign of a healthy heart is that it is far more miserly in wasting time than a miser is over his wealth.

When a healthy heart enters salāh, its worries and grief disappear, and it experiences peace and comfort. It experiences coolness of its eyes in salāh and perceives joy in its heart because of salāh.

A healthy heart never becomes lazy of Allāh's remembrance, is never fed up of His worship, and does not find affinity with anyone apart from Him.

Yes, it does find affinity with the person who points it towards Allāh *taʿālā* and reminds it of Him.

A healthy heart is more concerned about rectifying its intention than action itself. It is an embodiment of sincerity, devotion and desiring the wellbeing of others. It is intensely concerned about punctuality and regularity in actions, purification of the self and Allāh-consciousness. It considers itself most defective in fulfilling the rights of Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

[1] Mahbūb Ahmad Nadwī: *Shifā'-e-Dil*.

Man should always ask for increase in knowledge

There is no limit to knowledge. Although Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was blessed with the knowledge of the past and future generations, Allāh *taʿālā* ordered him to make duʿā' for an increase in knowledge:

قُلْ رَّبِّ زِدْنِيْ عِلْمًا

Make duʿā' like this: O Allāh! Increase my knowledge and understanding in such a way that I can understand the meanings and mysteries of Your Book, and the wisdoms behind Your injunctions as much as I can.

Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah relate from Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* who said that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to make the following supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ انْفَعْنِيْ بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنِيْ وَعَلِّمْنِيْ مَا يَنْفَعُنِيْ وَزِدْنِيْ عِلْمًا، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ عَلٰى كُلِّ حَالٍ، أَعُوْذُ بِاللهِ مِنْ حَالِ اَهْلِ النَّارِ.

O Allāh! Enable me to benefit me from the knowledge which You gave me. Teach me more of what will be useful to me, and increase my knowledge. All praise is due to Allāh taʿālā in every condition. I seek refuge in Allāh from the condition of the people of the Hell-fire.

A person should never consider the knowledge which he acquired to be sufficient. Every ʿālim – no matter how senior he is – must constantly ask for an increase in his knowledge. To this end, he must consider it essential to accompany and follow an ʿālim who is senior to him. This is because:

فوق كل ذي علم عليم

Above every knowledgeable person there is someone who is more knowledgeable.

Hadrat Imām Rabbānī Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Jīlānī *rahimahullāh* writes in his commentary to the above verse:

قُلْ رَّبِّ زِدْنِيْ عِلْمًا بما فيه من نفائس المعلومات وعجائب المعارف والحقائق.[1]

O my Allāh! Increase my knowledge with sciences in which there are excellent facts and unique realities.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an enlightening explanation. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this supplication in our favour by virtue of His grace and kindness. Āmīn. (compiler)

Knowledge of exposition is also necessary

قال الغزالي في أقسام علوم الآخرة: فالقسم الأول علم المكاشفة، وهو علم الباطن وذلك غاية العلوم، فقد قال بعض العارفين من لم يكن له نصيب من هذا العلم أخاف عليه سوء الخاتمة، وأدنى نصيب منه التصديق به وتسليمه لأهله.[2]

Imām Ghazzālī rahimahullāh said with reference to the types of sciences of the Hereafter: The first category is ʿilm al-mukāshafah (exposition). It is

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[1] تفسير جيلاني: ج ٣، ص ١٦٥.

[2] إحياء علوم الدين، كتاب العلم.

knowledge of the internal self. It is the peak of all sciences. One of the spiritual masters said: I fear a bad death for the one who does not have a share of this science. The minimum share of this science is to affirm it and to acknowledge and accept those who have it.

Those ʿulamā' who did not pay attention to this science eventually and finally expressed their regret at not having it.

ʿAllāmah Ibn Salāh said: ʿAllāmah Quṭb Tūfānī said to me on two occasions that he heard Imām Fakhr ad-Dīn Rāzī *raḥimahullāh* saying: "If only I did not occupy myself in scholastic theology (ʿilm al-kalām) as much as I did." He began crying after saying this.

ʿAllāmah Ibn Salāh *raḥimahullāh* relates that Imām Rāzī *raḥimahullāh* used to say: I gained proficiency in all the fundamentals of scholastic theology and philosophy. However, I finally realized that neither is the thirst of the thirsty quenched through these sciences, nor are the sick ones cured. I realized that the best path is that of the Qur'ān. I now read the following in affirming the greatness of Allāh *taʿālā*:

وَاللّٰهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ وَاَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ

Allāh alone is the independent one, while you all are in need.

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ

There is nothing similar to Him.

قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ

Say: He is Allāh, the one.

I read the following in affirming the Being of Allāh *taʿālā*:

اَلرَّحْمٰنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوٰى

The Merciful, who is established on the Throne.

يَخَافُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ

They fear their Sustainer from above them.

اِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ

It is to Him that the good word ascends.[1]

Note: Glory to Allāh! The verses which Imām Rāzī *raḥimahullāh* read or wrote in support of Islamic beliefs is a wide door of knowledge and recognition for us. It paves the way for us to furnish more proofs and evidences of this nature. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with the bounties of knowledge, recognition and insight so that we can benefit from the Qur'ān, Sunnat and sciences of our elders. Āmīn. (compiler)

Similarly, Imām Ghazzālī *raḥimahullāh* was immersed in the external sciences, and in teaching and writing on the subjects of logic and philosophy. Towards the end of his life, a certain condition was exposed to him. He describes it in the following text which Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī *raḥimahullāh* quoted in his *Tārīkh Daʿwat Wa ʿAzīmat*. I take the opportunity of quoting it here:

Personal experience and a comprehensive insight into the speculative as well as religious sciences led Imām Ghazzālī *raḥimahullāh* to the conclusion that

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[1] *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*, vol. 3, p. 239.

scholastic theology has only limited utility that may sometimes be even harmful in particular cases. He ultimately came to regard theology as a medicine that should not be administered to healthy people who did not need it. Sufficient nourishment could be provided amply through the Qur'ān. He maintained that the Qur'ān contained a superior logic, as its arguments are quite satisfying to people with common sense. In his last book, *Iljām al-ʿAwām ʿAn ʿIlm al-Kalām* (Restraining the Laity from the Science of Theology), Imām Ghazzālī *raḥimahullāh* observes:

فأدلة القرآن مثل الغذاء وينتفع به كل إنسان، وأدلة المتكلمين مثل الدواء وينتفع به أحداد الناس ويستضر به الأكثرون، بل أدلة القرآن كالماء الذي ينتفع به الصبي الرضيع والرجل القوي، وسائر الأدلة كالأطعمة التي ينتفع بها الأقوياء مرة ويمرضون بها أخرى، ولا ينتفع بها الصبيان أصلا.

The Qur'ānic arguments are like food that provides nourishment to everyone, while the logical system built up by the theologians is similar to a medicine that can be administered profitably only to a few and may even have harmful effects for others not requiring it. The Qur'ānic reasoning resembles water that can be taken both by the weak child and the robust youth, while theological argumentation is like a rich food that provides nourishment to the latter but is indigestible and even harmful to the former.

Continuing on the evil effects of dialectics, he writes:

والدليل على تضرر الخلق به المشاهدة والعيان والتجربة، وما ثار من الشر منذ نبغ المتكلمون وفشت صناعة الكلام من سلامة العصر الأول من الصحابة عن مثل ذلك.

The proof that people have been harmed by polemical theology is clear through observation and experience and through the rise of many evils that were not to be found during the times of the Companions.[1]

Recitation of the Qur'ān opens the door to knowledge

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اُتْلُ مَآ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ

Read what is revealed to you of the Book.

ʿAllāmah Bayḍāwī *raḥimahullāh* says in his commentary to the above:

تقربا إلى الله بقراءته وتحفظا لألفاظه واستكشافا لمعانيه، فإن القارئ المتأمل قد ينكشف له بالتكرار ما لم ينكشف له أول ما قرع سمعه.

The order to read the Qur'ān is given so that proximity to Allāh taʿālā may be realized through its recitation. Secondly, the words of the Qur'ān will be preserved. Thirdly its meanings will be exposed through constant repetition. When a person reads the Qur'ān repeatedly by pondering over it, certain meanings become exposed to him which were not exposed to him the first time he heard it.

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[1] *Tārīkh Daʿwat Wa ʿAzīmat*, vol. 1, p. 187.

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to like this explanation of ʿAllāmah Baydāwī *rahimahullāh*. He used to quote it to us and say: I will add one sentence to it:

تلذذا بقرائته

The reader will experience joy from reading the Qur'ān.

I say that there will be no harm if another statement is added to it:

تسننا بسنة النبي الكريم صلى الله عليه وسلم في تلاوة القرآن

The Qur'ān is recited to acquire the Sunnat of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.

In this way, in addition to the reward for reading the Qur'ān, the reader will receive the reward of following the Sunnat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Hadrat Jaʿfar Sādiq advises his son, Hadrat Mūsā Kāzim

A few students and companions of Hadrat Jaʿfar Sādiq *rahimahullāh* relate that they went to visit him on one occasion. His son, Hadrat Mūsā Kāzim *rahimahullāh,* was sitting in front of him. He advised his son as follows:

يا بني أقبل وصيتي واحفظ مقالتي فإنك إن حفظتها تعيش سعيدا وتموت حميدا:

١. يا بني، من رضي بما قسم له استغنى، ومن مد عينيه إلى ما في يد غيره مات فقيرا، ومن لم يرض بما قسمه الله له اتهم الله في قضائه.

٢. ومن استصغر زلة نفسه استعظم زلة غيره، ومن استصغر زلة غيره استعظم زلة نفسه.

٣. يا بني، من كشف حجاب غيره انكشفت عورات بيته.

٤. من سل سيف البغي قتل به.

٥. ومن احتفر لأخيه بئرا سقط فيها.

٦. ومن داخل السفهاء حقر ومن خالط العلماء وقر.

٧. ومن دخل مداخل السوء اتهم.

٨. يا بني، إياك أن تزري بالرجال فيزرى بك.

٩. وإياك والدخول فيما لا يعنيك فتذل لذلك.

١٠. يا بني، قل الحق لك أو عليك، تستشان من بين أقرانك.

١١. يا بني، كن لكتاب الله تاليا.

١٢. وللإسلام فاشيا.

١٣. وبالمعروف آمرا وعن المنكر ناهيا.

١٤. ولمن قطعك واصلا، ولمن سكت عنك مبتدئا.

١٥. ولمن سئلك معطيا.

١٦. وإياك والنميمة، فإنها تزرع الشحناء في قلوب الرجال.

١٧. وإياك والتعرض لعيوب الناس، فمنزلة التعرض لعيوب الناس بمنزلة الهدف.

١٨. يا بني، إذا طلبت الجود فعليك بمعادنه، فإن للجود معادن، وللمعادن أصولا، وللأصول فروعا، وللفروع ثمرا، ولا يطيب ثمر إلا بأصول، ولا أصل ثابت إلا بمعدن طيب.

١٩. يا بني، إن زرت فزر الأخيار ولا تزر الفجار، فإنهم صخرة لا يتفجر ماؤها، وشجر لا يخضر ورقها، وأرض لا يظهر عشبها.

قال علي بن موسى، فما ترك هذه الوصية إلى أن توفي.[1]

O my dear son! Remember my advice and listen to what I have to say. If you practise on it you will live an enjoyable life and have an enviable and praiseworthy death.

1. The one who is content with what he has will be independent of all apart from Allāh ta'ālā by virtue of the richness of his heart. The one who looks at the wealth of others out of greed or jealousy will most certainly die a pauper. The one who is not pleased with Allāh's sustenance will make accusations

[1] حلية، ج ٣، ص ١٩٥.

against Allāh taʿālā (which is most destructive, so abstain from it).

2. The one who considers his own sins to be small will regard the sins of others to be big. The one who considers the sins of others to be small will consider his own sins to be big.

3. The one who exposes the faults of others will find that his own or his family's hidden faults will become exposed. (Save yourself by concealing the faults of others so that your faults remain concealed).

4. The one who unsheathes the sword of rebellion and sedition will be killed by his own sword.

5. The one who digs a hole for others to fall in will himself fall in it and be destroyed.

6. The one who joins the company of foolish and irreligious people is considered wretched and disgraceful. The one who remains in the company of 'ulamā' and auliyā' is considered to be honourable and respectable.

7. The one who goes to evil places stands accused. That is, people consider him to be evil.

8. O my beloved son! Do not accuse people of faults or else they too will respond by doing the same to you.

9. Do not become involved in useless activities or else you will be disgraced.

A Hadīth states: The beauty of a person's Islam lies in his keeping away from futilities. (compiler)

10. O my dear son! Always speak the truth irrespective of whether it will be beneficial or harmful to you in the worldly sense. If you are able to do this, you will enjoy a lofty position among your peers.

11. O my beloved son! Read the Qur'ān excessively because it is a very blessed act.

12. Try to propagate Islam (according to your capability because this is obligatory on every Muslim).

13. Enjoin good and forbid evil (i.e. encourage people to do good and prohibit them from evil because this is essential).

14. If any relative breaks ties with you by fighting with you or through any other way, you must endeavour to reconcile with love and kindness. If a relative or friend severs ties with you and stops speaking to you, you must be the first one to try and reconcile.

A Hadīth states: "Join ties with the one who severs them." (compiler)

15. If a person asks you for anything, give him according to what you can afford.

16. Abstain from tale-bearing (carrying tales with the intention of mischief) because it results in separation and hatred both of which are impermissible.

17. Do not search for the faults of others because this is synonymous to making yourself a target for accusations (in other words, people will popularize your faults).

18. O my dear son! If you need to ask anything from anyone then ask for it from a mine of generosity, i.e. from a person of noble lineage. This is because generosity has its source, a source has its origins, and origins have their subsidiaries, and subsidiaries bear fruits, and fruits are only as good as their origins. No origin is firm unless it has a pure source, i.e. it is dependent on a pure lineage.

19. O my dear son! If you want to visit anyone then visit good people and do not visit sinners. A sinner is like a rock from which no water gushes forth, a tree whose leaves never become green, and a ground whose grass never grows.

ʿAlī ibn Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar said: My father, Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar, adhered to this advice until his death.

Dear brothers! These are 19 pieces of advice which are most important. If a person practises on them, he will be able to enjoy the delights of this world and the Hereafter. Unfortunately, it is extremely rare to find only a few people practising on only a few of these golden words of advice.

We make duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* to inspire us to practise on all these pieces of advice. Āmīn. (compiler)

THE PROPAGATIONAL AND RECTIFICATIONAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

It was a good coincidence that while I was writing *Ḥayātul Qulūb*, Fahīm Aḥmad Lucknowī gave me an important book titled *Islām Kā Tablīghī Wa Iṣlāḥī Niẓām* (The Propagational and Rectificational System of Islam) written by Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Iḥtishām al-Ḥaq Ṣāḥib Kāndhlawī *raḥimahullāh*. I studied it from cover to cover and benefited tremendously from it. I was especially impressed by the themes related to "the progressive aspect of work". My heart desires that I quote it in its entirety so that every seeker of the path may benefit. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Wāḍiḥ Rashīd Ṣāḥib Nadwī wrote with reference to this book:

> The objectives and guidelines which the author noted hold the position of a foundation upon which a human can become a high-ranking human, and a Muslim can become a very distinguished Muslim. It is not only those who are attached to the work of Daʿwat and Tablīgh who can benefit from this book. Rather, the elite and the laity can obtain guidelines for their lives through it.

The subject matter now follows.

The progressive angle of the work of Tablīgh

When some people adhered to the initial course of action for a period of time, and its effects and fruits were observed, Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* felt that in this very system such

points should be included through which the stations of Tarīqat could be traversed, and the methods of the Sufi masters which were in vogue among them for reaching Allāh *taʿālā* should be incorporated in this work. Hadrat asked me to carry out this task but I continually declined because I felt I was not qualified for it. But Hadrat persisted and this persistence and my refusal continued for a month. I eventually agreed, put pen to paper and a booklet *Islāmī Zindagī* was prepared. I had to refer to several books on the subject of tasawwuf and I concluded that *Sirāṭ-e-Mustaqīm* of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Ismāʿīl Sāhib Shahīd Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* is a very comprehensive work on the subject of the Sharīʿat and Tarīqat. I found this book to be closest to this system [of Tablīgh]. In fact, if one ponders over it, he will conclude that it is a detailed constitution for this work. I did my utmost to extract the essence of this book and then to fill it into this work.

In *Islāmī Zindagī*, the objective of the Sharīʿat and Tarīqat was explained, the fundamental of which is to establish a bond with Allāh *taʿālā* and to reach Him.

The objective of the Sharīʿat

The objective of the Sharīʿat is that a correct bond and relationship be established between the Master and the servant, and that man's entire life be embodied in servitude. This is the meaning of Islam.

In Tarīqat, those practices and exercises are practised which are means towards reaching Allāh *taʿālā* and increase the bond with Him.

Love is of two types, personal and rational. These two are then explained:

The objective of commissioning Prophets is to invite towards rational love. This is why it is referred to as īmānī love. The path through which it is acquired is the path of prophet-hood.

Īmānī love is then explained and this is the way of acquiring it:

The objective of life: Servitude to the Master

We learnt previously that servitude to the Master is the objective of life, and servitude depends on love and respect. Thus, the fundamental axis of man's spiritual life is to develop a bond of love and respect with Allāh *taʿālā*. Without this there is no life. In fact, it will be a life of animals.

This is why actions which increase and intensify this love and respect are laid down as essentials for every Muslim. These are known as the pillars of Islam. Apart from these, there are actions which create freshness and a sparkle in a person's spiritual life, and aid in creating the element of love and respect for Allāh *taʿālā*. Their virtue and excellence are explained to the extent that man automatically inclines towards them. The following are the most superior and most important actions:

1. Abundant remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*.
2. Recitation of the Qur'ān.
3. The importance of acquiring knowledge of Dīn.
4. The superiority of striving in Allāh's cause.

We learn that the manner of acquiring īmānī love and the means for the continuity of the element of love and respect lies in remaining attached to these actions. These actions are not the objectives themselves but are means towards the real objective.

However, since the real objective cannot be realized without these means, it becomes essential and necessary to adopt them.

After this initial prelude and the correction of our intention, the fundamental work is presented as follows:

Six important actions

(1)

The first and most important action is to remind one's self of the greatness and love of *Lā Ilāha Illallāh Muḥammadur Rasūlullāh* to the extent that it permeates the heart and mind. The more the mind delves into the depths of this kalimah, the more it will be filled with the emotion of love. Repeating the kalimah abundantly results in freshness and lushness in one's īmān. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*: "You must continually freshen your īmān." They asked: "How?" Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "By repeating *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* abundantly."

This is why the Sufi masters first instruct every person to read this kalimah. They ask them to repeat it until its love and greatness permeates the heart, mind, veins and every part of the body.

When the meaning of this kalimah encompasses a person, the doors of progress open to him. (The meaning of this kalimah is then explained).

(2)

To understand the reality of ṣalāh and develop an attachment to it to the extent that genuine comfort, peace and tranquillity are experienced in ṣalāh. (The

reality of salāh and the manner of performing a genuine salāh is then explained).

(3)

To develop an attachment to the Qur'ān. The person must set aside a certain time to read the Qur'ān daily with full respect, and to ponder over its meanings. Allāh *taʿālā* sent a complete constitution for the guidance of His creation via His Messenger *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The path to man's rectitude, success, progress and excellence is explained in it. Success and salvation have been confined to following it. Every single thing which is contained in it is the truth, it has to be accepted and it has to be practised upon. Its every word is a light and guidance for the way. This royal edict is like a fundamental constitution for human life. The person who makes it the foundation of his life and appoints it as his leader and guide will certainly be successful. If not, he will be destroyed.

The Qur'ān is that grand edict of the King of kings who is the Creator and Master of the Throne, the earth and skies, the sun and moon, humans, animals, jinn, the plant kingdom, inanimate objects and everything else. Every single thing – whether big or small – is under His control. His speech is in line with the greatness and might which He is eligible for. The more respect, honour, and love His speech is received with, the closer a person will be in His court, and according to that extent he will receive the blessings of the Highest Companionship (al-Mala' al-Aʿlā). Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَتْلُوْنَهٗ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهٖ ؕ أُولٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ ؕ وَ مَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِهٖ فَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ.

Those people to whom We gave the Book, they recite it as it ought to be recited. It is they who have conviction in it. And whoever would reject it, it is they who will be the losers.[1]

A few etiquette when reciting the Qur'ān

1. After performing wuḍū', sit down with utmost respect, facing the qiblah, with your head lowered, sitting as you would in ṣalāh, and read the Qur'ān by pausing in-between and pronouncing the words correctly.

This is the external respect. The fundamental respect is that of the heart. However, since the external has an effect on the internal, external respect is also necessary.

2. The heart must be filled with love and respect for this sanctified speech. The effects of this must be seen on the outside as well. A person must develop that condition which is described in the Qur'ān as follows:

اَللّٰهُ نَزَّلَ اَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيْثِ كِتٰبًا مُّتَشَابِهًا مَّثَانِيَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُوْدُ الَّذِيْنَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِيْنُ جُلُوْدُهُمْ وَقُلُوْبُهُمْ اِلٰى ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ، ذٰلِكَ هُدَى اللّٰهِ يَهْدِيْ بِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ، وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلِ اللّٰهُ فَمَا لَهٗ مِنْ هَادٍ.

Allāh revealed the best speech, a Book, in unison with itself and oft-repeated. [Whereat] the hairs stand on end on the skins of those who fear their Sustainer. Thereafter, their skins and hearts soften to the remembrance of Allāh. This is the guidance of Allāh. He shows the way thereby to whomever He wills. Him

[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 121.

whom Allāh leads astray, he has no one at all to guide him.[1]

This is the internal respect. The more the respect and love for this speech is embedded in the heart, the more the heart will be filled with light, effulgence and blessings.

3. If you are able to understand the meaning of the Qur'ān, then do not read any verse without understanding it. Rather, ponder over every theme carefully and try to refresh its meaning in your heart. Never suffice with your own understanding. Instead, whenever you have any doubt, consult a righteous ʿālim. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

كِتٰبٌ أَنْزَلْنٰهُ اِلَيْكَ مُبٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوْا اٰيٰتِهٖ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ.

It is a blessed Book which We revealed to you so that people may contemplate over its verses and intelligent people may comprehend it.[2]

This verse points to the objective behind the revelation of the Qur'ān.

4. Affirm every theme with your heart, and do not allow any room for doubts and misgivings. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ، هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ

There is no doubt in this book. (It) guides those who fear.[3]

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[1] Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 23.
[2] Sūrah Sād, 38: 29.
[3] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 2.

If – unfortunately – you cannot even read the Qur'ān, you must be remorseful over this shortcoming and dedicate some time daily to learn the Qur'ān.

(4)

Some time must be spent in Allāh's remembrance.

When the tongue repeatedly speaks about the beauty of something, a person inevitably develops an attachment for it. When the beauty of a thing envelops the eyes and embeds itself in the heart, the tongue spontaneously speaks about it all the time. The heart constantly thinks about it. We learn from this that if you want to develop a bond with someone, you must repeat the person's name with yearning and enthusiasm all the time, and speak about the person's good qualities. Once a bond of love is established, then the beloved is remembered in all conditions – while standing, sitting, waking up, lying down and so on. Remembrance of the person pulsates the heart all the time.

If a complete bond of love is established with Allāh *taʿālā*, a person will most definitely remember Him all the time and speak about Him. He will not enjoy any period of tranquillity without taking the Beloved's name. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ

Listen! It is only in Allāh's remembrance that the hearts experience tranquillity.

The more Allāh's excellent qualities and attributes are expressed by the tongue, the more the heart will become attached to Him.

There is no limit and end to Allāh's qualities. His ocean is a shore-less ocean. If there is any deficiency

in the love and bond, then the method of removing it is also the same. That is, to ponder over Allāh's excellent and beautiful qualities, place them in the heart, and speak about them with yearning and enthusiasm. This will gradually result in a bond with Allāh *taʿālā*. The more His qualities will be embedded in the heart, the more it will be filled with His love. And love for all apart from Him will disappear. This is why there is great virtue in and emphasis on remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيْرًا وَّسَبِّحُوْهُ بُكْرَةً وَّاَصِيْلًا.

O believers! Remember Allāh with unceasing remembrance. And continue glorifying Him morning and evening.[1]

وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ نَسُوا اللّٰهَ فَاَنْسٰهُمْ اَنْفُسَهُمْ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ.

Do not be like those who forgot Allāh so He caused them to forget their own selves. They are the flagrant sinners.

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِيْ فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيْشَةً ضَنْكًا وَّنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ أَعْمٰى.

Whoever turns away from My remembrance, for him is a life of constriction and on the day of Resurrection We shall raise him up blind.[2]

One point you must be mindful of is that the Almighty King whose name you are taking is fully aware of you, He is listening to you, and has full knowledge of the condition of your heart. You must therefore remember Him with the respect and love

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[1] Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 41-42.
[2] Sūrah Ṭā Hā, 20: 124.

which is suited to His greatness and might. At the same time, He is most merciful and kind; He will remember you with His kindness and affection. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاذْكُرُوْنِيْ اَذْكُرْكُمْ

Remember Me and I will remember you.

If you take His name heedlessly and without any attention, although it will certainly leave its mark on you and bear fruition at some time, you will not be eligible for His kindness and affection on account of your heedlessness and negligence.

The initial form of dhikr is:

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ، وَلَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ، وَاللهُ اَكْبَرُ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيْمِ.

This must be repeated 100 times in the morning and evening while pondering over its meaning, and saying it with respect, love and with full concentration. This should be followed by durūd sharīf and istighfār – any amount specified by yourself. There are great virtues for this as mentioned in the Aḥādīth. Once the heart becomes accustomed to these forms of dhikr and you render them regularly and punctually, you must consult a Sufi shaykh who is strict in following the Sunnat and ask him what else you should read.

(5)

Making efforts to acquire knowledge of Dīn.

The purpose of man's creation is Allāh's worship and obedience to Him. The means to this worship and obedience is obedience to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu*

ʿalayhi wa sallam and following him. Obedience and worship of Allāh *taʿālā* cannot be fruitful without obedience to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Any step which is taken against Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* will cause a person to shift from the straight path and convey him towards destruction. It therefore becomes essential for a person to learn the order of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in every department of life at every step of the way, and to then practise accordingly. This is why much emphasis is laid on acquiring knowledge of Dīn. It is therefore essential for every Muslim to endeavour to acquire knowledge of Dīn according to his capability and the time which is available to him.

This in no certain way means that every person must give up his occupation and take admission in a madrasah. Rather, while a person is occupied in his work, he must set aside some time for learning Dīn. This could take two forms:

1. To keep the company of people of the heart, men of spirituality, those who are pious and possess knowledge of Dīn. He must take benefit from their teachings and statements. The company of righteous people of this nature creates effulgence and capability in the heart. The teachings and statements of the auliyā' emanate from the heart; this is why they make an impact on the hearts of others. This removes the hardness of the heart, creates concern for the forthcoming life, and generates enthusiasm for servitude and obedience to Allāh *taʿālā*. He says in this regard:

يٰأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ

O believers! Continually fear Allāh and remain with the truthful.[1]

2. Read books through which the orders of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* are learnt, enthusiasm to carry those orders is created, and the mind is nurtured towards religious sentiments.

A few points on reading books are noteworthy:

a) Religious books should not be read for mere passing of time or for increase in facts. This will amount to extreme ingratitude towards Dīn. The purpose of reading Dīnī books should be to learn the injunctions of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* so that one may act accordingly and acquire the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It is with this objective that this knowledge should be received. There must be enthusiasm, yearning and respect when acquiring it.

b) When choosing which books to read, the writings of such seniors must be selected regarding whose religiosity and following of the Sharīʿat you have full confidence. It is most reckless to read the book of every Tom, Dick and Harry. The slightest slip up in this regard can cause a person to destroy his Dīn.

c) Once you learn that a certain point is an order of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, you must accept it without any hesitation – irrespective of whether you understand it or not. This is because human intellect is absolutely useless before the order of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 119.

(6)

To strive for the supremacy of Allāh's injunctions and the Dīn of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* because this is the fundamental purpose of jihād in Allāh's cause and its supreme objective.

Allāh *taʿālā* promulgates His orders in this world for the establishment of peace and security. He could have decreed to compel every single human to accept His orders. But divine will was against that. Rather, He made this world a place of tests so that whoever does good or bad does so by his own choice; he is not totally and absolutely compelled. Allāh *taʿālā* created good and evil, and explained to man the consequences of both so that man could use his intellect and choose the better path. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۟ فَمَنْ شَآءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَّمَنْ شَآءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ ۙ إِنَّآ اَعْتَدْنَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ نَارًا.

Say: The truth is from your Sustainer. Then whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve. We have prepared for the sinners a fire.[1]

لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّيْنِ ۙ قَدْ تَّبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوْتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ ۢ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقٰى ۗ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ.

There is no compulsion in matters of religion. Surely guidance has been separated from deviation. Now whoever renounces the devious ones and has

[1] Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 29.

conviction in Allāh, then he has held on to the firm bond which will never break. Allāh is all-hearing, all-knowing.[1]

If the entire world chooses the path of evil, it will not affect the greatness and might of Allāh *taʿālā* in the least. However, His kindness and affection demand that His creation chooses the path of righteousness and be a willing embodiment of it. Allāh *taʿālā* sent thousands of Prophets and Messengers so that they may place humanity on the path of righteousness through wisdom and sound admonition. Allāh *taʿālā* then terminated prophet-hood and messenger-ship with the chief of all, Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This task is now given to his followers for eternity. It is by virtue of this task that they are given the title of "best of nations". The greatest act of virtue and the fundamental concern is to show the straight path to a deviated person. The misguided creation must be conveyed to the court of the Creator. This was the task with which Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was delegated. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اُدْعُ إِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and kind admonition; and argue with them in a way that is best.[2]

It was this core principle of concern for one's fellow humans which was laid down as an essential for

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 256.
[2] Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 125.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and his followers. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قُلْ هٰذِهٖ سَبِيْلِيْٓ اَدْعُوْٓا اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۗ عَلٰى بَصِيْرَةٍ اَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِيْ ۭ وَسُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ وَمَآ اَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ.

Say: This is my path. I invite towards Allāh with insight, I and whoever is with me. Allāh is pure. And I am not of those who ascribe partners.[1]

وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَآ اِلَى اللّٰهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَّقَالَ اِنَّنِيْ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ

Who can better in speech than the one who invites towards Allāh, does good and says: I am of those who are Muslims?

We learn from this that the primary objective of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was to invite people towards Allāh *taʿālā*, show the true path to the wandering ones, and to guide those who have deviated. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then included every follower of his for the progress, continuity and preservation of this objective.[2]

Note: By the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, the above themes are most beneficial for all sections of the community – the elite and the laity. They are most worthy of putting into practice. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone. (compiler)

I now take the opportunity of presenting to the reader an explanation and elucidation of those special

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[1] Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 108.

[2] Maulānā Muhammad Ihtishām al-Hasan Kāndhlawī: *Islām Kā Tablīghī Wa Islāhī Nizām*, pp. 105-123.

blessed words which are found in the Qur'ān, Aḥādīth and books of the Sufis. These explanations have been sourced from authentic books especially from *Tafsīrī Nukāt* of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *raḥimahullāh*. Allāh willing, once these meanings are clearly understood, they will be sources of enlightenment for all Muslims and those treading the path of sulūk. It may very well be that the hearts will be blessed with life. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

EXPLANATION OF QUR'ĀNIC TERMS

Hidāyat

Out of His mercy for His creation, Allāh *taʿālā* taught it the following supplication:

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ

Show us the straight path, enable us to tread it, and convey us to our destination.

Hidāyat means to guide or steer someone with kindness and affection. This is why in reality it is always used on occasions of good.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* taught this duʿā' to His creation in Sūrah al-Fātiḥah which is a most comprehensive sūrah. Therefore, this supplication is the most comprehensive, as stated by Ibn Taymīyyah.

It is necessary to read this supplication in every rakʿat of ṣalāh in the course of reading Sūrah al-Fātiḥah.

We can therefore say that:

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ

Is a most comprehensive and important duʿā' which has been taught to man. No member of the human race can be independent of it. Without the straight path, there is no success in this world and in the Hereafter. This duʿā' is an elixir for worldly challenges as well, but people do not pay attention to it.

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[1] Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān.*

The words “guide us” not only mean, show us the straight path. Rather, its meaning is much deeper. It also means, cause our hearts to be convinced about the correctness of this path, create enthusiasm within us to tread this path, makes its difficulties easy for us, and after enabling us to tread it, safeguard us from wandering elsewhere. All these meanings are included.

The “alif lām” in *al-ṣirāṭ* is for ʿahd. This means that it refers to the straight path which Allāh *taʿālā* Himself opened for His servants. It is the path which guarantees success in Dīnī and worldly matters. It is the same path to which all the Prophets and Messengers invited. It is the path which was followed by all of Allāh’s righteous servants. It is the shortest and easiest path. The deviated ones paved many deviated paths from it. On the other hand, the straight path is standing on its own, and those who were desirous of reaching Allāh *taʿālā* always trod this path and reached their destination. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* explained the straight path on one occasion by drawing a straight line on the ground. He then drew lines that were cutting across on either side and said to the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* that this centre line is the straight path, the other lines which are cutting across are deviated paths to which a devil is inviting the people.[1]

Although a person may be on the straight path with respect to certain matters, he still has to seek it and ask for it because there are different levels of the straight path. After every level of perfection there is another one which is higher than the previous one.

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[1] *Tadabbur-e-Qur’ān*, p. 16.

Some levels are high while others are low. The person who is on the lower level must seek the higher level. The one who is on the higher level must seek the next level which is higher than it. This continues to infinity.

Straightness of the path is based on several factors:

The shortest path. The shorter path is normally the straighter one, as opposed to the long path.

Cleanliness of the path. The straight path is completely devoid of rocks, stones, soil, thorns and other harmful objects.

A poet rightly said:

Choose the straight path even if it is far.

Safety of the path. It has to be safe from thieves, animals of prey and other harmful animals. The path must also be free from not having food and drink. If a person wants to reach his destination, the straight path will have to fulfil these conditions. If a person is on the straight path in one aspect, it is necessary for him to seek the other aspects.

A further explanation of the above is that a person must distance himself from relationships of the self by becoming immersed in Allāh's dhikr. This is the shortest path.

The safest path is through worship and pondering over Allāh's signs in the creations by following the Sharīʿat.

Following the path of concessions as given by the Sharīʿat is the cleanest path as opposed to the path of monasticism and extremism.

Straightness is also of three types: (1) straightness in words, (2) straightness in actions, (3) straightness in

conditions. When a person chooses straightness in one, it is necessary for him to seek the others as well. We learn from this that whether a person is a novice, in the intermediate phase or has reached the peak; he cannot do without the straight path.

This is why this duʿā' has been prescribed at the time of supplications and Allāh's servants have been taught to say it. After all, to choose the middle way and to abstain from excesses and shortcomings are desirable qualities in every department of Dīn.[1]

This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* would constantly make duʿā' for hidāyat. For example:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ الْهُدٰى وَالتُّقٰى وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنٰى. اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِنِيْ وَسَدِّدْنِيْ.

O Allāh! I beg You for guidance, piety, chastity and independence. O Allāh! Guide me and keep me on the balanced path.

After explaining hidāyat, I feel it would be appropriate to follow it with an explanation of īmān and Islam as explained by Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* in *Hayāt al-Muslimīn*. I take the opportunity of quoting it here.

Īmān and Islam

The words "Islam" and "īmān" are very close in meaning.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِنَّ الدِّيْنَ عِنْدَ اللهِ الْاِسْلَامُ

[1] *Tafsīr ʿAzīzī.*

Undoubtedly the [true] religion in Allāh's sight is Islam.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَنْ يَّبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْاِسْلَامِ دِيْنًا فَلَنْ يُّقْبَلَ مِنْهُ، وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ

Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him. And in the Hereafter he is doomed.[2]

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَنْ يَّرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِيْنِهٖ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ اَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۚ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ.

Whoever from among you turns away from his religion [Islam] and dies in the state of unbelief, then the [good] deeds of such have been ruined in this world and in the Hereafter. They are destined to live in the Hell-fire. They shall abide therein forever.[3]

The ruin of one's deeds in this world means that the person's wife comes out of his marriage, he will not receive any share of inheritance if any of his Muslim relative passes away from whom he could have received an inheritance; and when he dies, no janāzah salāh is performed for him. His ruin in the Hereafter entails remaining in the Hell-fire forever and ever.

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[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 19.
[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 85.
[3] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 217.

Ruling: If this person re-enters the fold of Islam, he will have to enter into a new marriage with his wife provided she is willing. If she is not, he cannot compel her to marry him.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْآ اٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَالْكِتٰبِ الَّذِيْ نَزَّلَ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ وَالْكِتٰبِ الَّذِيْ اَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًا بَعِيْدًا. اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا ثُمَّ اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوْا كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيْلاً.

O believers! Have conviction in Allāh, His Messenger, the Book which He revealed to His Messenger, and in the Book which He revealed previously. Whoever does not believe in Allāh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and in the day of Resurrection has strayed very far away. Those who became Muslims and then became unbelievers, then became Muslims, then became unbelievers, then continued increasing in their unbelief [i.e. until death] – Allāh will never forgive them nor will He show them the way [to Paradise].[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيْهِمْ نَارًا ؕ كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُوْدُهُمْ بَدَّلْنٰهُمْ جُلُوْدًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَزِيْزًا حَكِيْمًا.

[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 136-137.

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ؕ لَهُمْ فِيْهَآ اَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۫ وَّنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيْلًا.

Surely those who rejected Our verses [i.e. they did not choose īmān], We shall cast them into the Hell-fire. [Their condition in it will be that] when their skins get burnt [by the fire], We will change their skins for other skins so that they may continuously taste the punishment. Surely Allāh is powerful, wise. Those who believed and did good deeds, We shall certainly enter them into gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever. For them, therein, are spouses purified. And We shall enter them in a dense shade.[1]

These verses describe – to a certain extent – the bounties of Paradise for the Muslims and the torments of the Hell-fire for the non-Muslims. Other verses and Aḥādīth contain many descriptions of the bounties of Paradise and the torments in the Hell-fire.

O Muslims! This worldly life is very short. If you remain steadfast on Islam and accept that you will have to bear some hardships, then the moment you pass away, you will experience such comfort and peace that you will forget all your hardships. If – Allāh forbid – a person turns away from Islam out of certain motive or to save himself from some type of calamity, then the moment he dies, he will have to face such torments which will cause him to forget all the comforts and luxuries of this world. Subsequently, he will never gain salvation from these calamities. A person having a little intelligence will

[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 56-57.

not forsake Islam even if he were to receive the kingship of the entire world.

O Allāh! Guide our brothers and set right their intellects.

Tauḥīd

Tauḥīd is the life and soul of all the principles of Islam. Linguistically it means to recognize and accept something as one. In the definition of the Sharīʿat it refers to accepting Allāh *taʿālā* as one with one's heart and soul. In other words, a person must believe with his heart and soul that Allāh *taʿālā* has no partner and no equal as regards His Being and His attributes and qualities. This is tauḥīd. It has two levels:

The first level is to consider Allāh *taʿālā* to be alone in His Being and attributes, to abstain from worshipping any creation, and to abstain from believing that it has its own power of benefiting or harming. This is the tauḥīd of the people of the Sharīʿat.

According to the people of the Ṭarīqat, tauḥīd means to abstain from setting one's gaze on anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. They feel that it is polytheism to even set one's gaze on the causes. One must focus only on the One who brings the causes into existence – this is tauḥīd [according to them] and it is a more perfect level than the previous one. The Sufis say that tauḥīd means to observe the Oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*. To put it in another way, it means that a person must turn away from all that is created and fleeting, and focus solely on the One who is eternal and has been since eternity.

A general acknowledgement of tauhīd is found in all religions. Even nations which are open polytheists and idol worshippers believe in an absolute all-powerful being, but they believe in the plurality of his attributes and qualities. Christians believe in three gods but also say that these three are one. No matter how wrong this expression of theirs maybe, it certainly proves that they too do not approve of abandoning tauhīd in its entirety. Instead of abandoning it completely, they feel it is better to combine polytheism with tauhīd even though this combination entails the combination of opposites.

In short, a general acknowledgement of tauhīd is found in all religions. Nonetheless, the peculiarity and distinctiveness which Islam enjoys is that it calls to such a complete and pure tauhīd which is totally and absolutely pure from even the inklings and notions of glaring and subtle forms of polytheism.

The tauhīd of Islam is that the God of the entire universe is one. He is the One who brought all this into existence. He alone fulfils the needs of all. One God alone is administering the whole world without any difficulty and without any partner. He neither has any partner in His Being nor in His attributes and qualities. The qualities of creating, giving life, being the knower of the unseen, giving sustenance, being worthy of worship, etc. are qualities which are peculiar to Allāh *taʿālā* alone. Apart from Islam, the adherents of other religions believe that these qualities are found in their saints and prophets. This is the defect in their tauhīd. For the completion and perfection of tauhīd, Islam laid down the obligation and essentiality of tauhīd in Allāh's Being, His attributes and His worship. So much so, Islam has

even prohibited and made unlawful a prostration of respect (which was permitted in other religions).[1]

Risālat

Prophet-hood and messenger-ship is the second principle of Islam. Like belief in the Oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*, it is compulsory to believe that messenger-ship is true and to accept it. Just as Allāh *taʿālā* created doctors and physicians for the treatment of our physical ailments, He sent Prophets and Messengers for the treatment of our spiritual ailments. It is through them that our spiritual illnesses and ailments are treated. One of the duties of the Prophets is to explain to us certain things which our intellects cannot fathom on their own. Our intellects have the capability of understanding them but only when they are explained to us by someone else. This is similar to how we cannot understand the nature and effects of medicines without doctors and physicians explaining them to us. These are then fully affirmed after we experience them. A few fundamental themes on this second principle of Islam are now presented to the reader.

The rank of prophet-hood

Allāh *taʿālā* created various types and categories of things in this universe. There is no type wherein there are no differences between members of that type or category. For example, some rocks are of no value while others are diamonds. In the plant kingdom we see spinach and herbs, and we also come across saffron. In the plant kingdom there are

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[1] Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Usūl-e-Islam*, p. 10.

donkeys and dogs, and there are also goats and buck. Among humans, the heart of one person is as clear as a mirror, while the heart of another is has hard as a rock or steel. The rays of the sun fall on all – steel and mirror. The one whose heart is as clear as a mirror absorbs the rays of the sun and its reflection is seen in him. The heart which is not yet a mirror, or it is a mirror but is covered with rust or has turned black will not accept the rays of the sun. The fault lies with the recipient and not the benefactor. One can understand from this that the effulgence of the "light of the heavens and earth" can be accepted only by that heart which is pure from all types of evils and has been cleansed of every type of rust.

From the human race, those whose selves are clear and glittering like a mirror, and are pure from animalistic and satanic elements are selected by Allāh *taʿālā* for His ambassadorship and deputyship. Allāh *taʿālā* honours them with His special speech and apprises them of His injunctions and guidelines so that these pure souls can become the means for conveying Allāh's message to His servants. This is so that they can place His servants onto the path of guidance and rectitude, and save them from Hell by warning them of the things which would destroy them. They are to inform them of Allāh's prohibitions and bring them onto the path of salvation. Those whom Allāh *taʿālā* sends for the guidance of His creation and conveying of His message and injunctions are – in the terminology of Islam – known as Prophets and Messengers.

The words *Nabī* and *Nubūwwat* are derived from *naba'* which means news or information. In the definition of the Sharīʿat, a Nabī is that selected servant of Allāh *taʿālā* who is instructed by Him to

guide mankind, and to convey His orders and instructions. Or, to put it differently, a Prophet is that special servant whom Allāh *taʿālā* selected for His special information and orders. He has to convey this information to the creations which possess intellects. They are to apprise them of all the things which would be the means for their success and goodness in matters related to their Dīn and worldly life. Thus, the special servant who receives the information from Allāh *taʿālā* and conveys it to the servants is a Nabī, and the passing on of that information is known as Nubūwwat. Like ambassadorship, this is a very high rank conferred by Allāh *taʿālā* to His special and selected servants. Ibn Amīr al-Ḥāj writes in *Sharḥ Taḥrīr al-Uṣūl*:

قال بعض المحققين أجمع الأقوال الشارحة للرسالة الإلهية أنها سفارة بين الحق تنبه أولي الألباب على ما يقصر عنه عقولهم من صفات معبودهم ومعادهم ومصالح دينهم ودنياهم ومستحثات تهديهم ودافع ثبيه ترديهم.[1]

Some erudite scholars say that the most comprehensive definition of prophet-hood and messenger-ship is that it refers to that position of ambassadorship between Allāh taʿālā and His creation so that this ambassador of Allāh taʿālā (i.e. the Prophet) may apprise people of intellect of those things which their intellects cannot fathom [on their own]. For example, the attributes of Allāh taʿālā, matters related to the Hereafter, their religious and worldly benefits. And to guide and steer them through

[1] شرح تحرير الأصول: ج ١، ص ٧.

sound advice and admonition, and to remove those doubts and misgivings which could lead to their destruction.

Although the Prophets speak to people of matters which are beyond their intellects, they have that capability of understanding them when they are explained and expounded to them. This is similar to how a person cannot understand the nature of a medicine unless it is explained to him by a doctor. Once the doctor explains it to him, he understands it, his intellect affirms it, and he then applies it.

Some scholars are of the view that Nubūwwat means loftiness and highness. Thus, a Nabī is one who enjoys a high and lofty rank in the court of Allāh *taʿālā*. Without having undergone a process of learning, education and striving, he is conferred with such knowledge and sciences by Allāh *taʿālā* which are beyond normal intellect. These sciences cannot be acquired by striving and working for them. They are then instructed by Allāh *taʿālā* that whatever injunction, information or message He gives to them from time to time must be conveyed to His servants. The one who conveys these sciences and injunctions to His servants is called a Nabī. And this lofty and grand position and rank is known as Nubūwwat and Risālat – prophet-hood and messenger-ship. Obviously, there can be no position and rank higher than that of ambassadorship and deputyship on behalf of Allāh *taʿālā*.

وَاللّٰهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ

Allāh selects for His mercy whomever He wills.

This is that grand position before which the kingdom of this entire world is absolutely and totally

worthless. This is why all Muslims unanimously state that prophet-hood is purely a bestowal and gift from Allāh *taʿālā* – He confers it to whomever He wills.

Philosophers are of the view that prophet-hood can be acquired through striving and practising. They feel that it is earned. On the other hand, Muslims believe that it is a divine bestowal. No matter how worthy and qualified a person may be, he cannot become an ambassador or a minister of his own accord unless the king or prime minister appoints him to that post. A royal decree or edict is necessary for this position, mere qualification is not enough.

Difference between a Nabī and a Rasūl

Some scholars are of the view that there is no difference between a Nabī and a Rasūl, and that both words refer to the same person. Others are of the view that there is a difference; and this is the view of the majority. They say that a Nabī is general while a Rasūl is specific. The person who receives divine revelation from Allāh *taʿālā*, and is ordered to guide people and convey Allāh's orders is a Nabī. If he has any other distinguishing quality, e.g. he is given a new Book, a new Sharīʿat, or – the Sharīʿat is not new but he is sent to a new nation, or he is sent to combat and fight the rejecters, then he is known as a Nabī Rasūl or Rasūl Nabī. For example, Hadrat Ismāʿīl *ʿalayhis salām* had the Sharīʿat of Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* but he was sent to a different nation, viz. the Jurhum.

Allāh *taʿālā* honoured every Prophet with revelation and the descent of angels. Every Prophet was given certain miracles through which his prophet-hood was proven. Certain Prophets were given special

distinguishing accolades, e.g. Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām* was created directly by Allāh *taʿālā*, appointed as His vicegerent, and the angels were made to prostrate before him. Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* had the honour of speaking directly to Allāh *taʿālā*, and so on.

Thus, from among the Prophets, those who, in addition to receiving divine revelation and miracles, were given some other distinguishing accolade are known as Nabī Rasūl or Rasūl Nabī.[1]

The Resurrection and the Hereafter

Belief in the Resurrection and the Hereafter is from among the absolute principles and beliefs of Islam. After inviting to tauhīd, the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* informed their respective nations about the Hereafter. There will come a time when this entire universe will be destroyed. Allāh *taʿālā* will revive all who have died and were reduced to bits. Every body will be reattached to its soul. After bringing the people back to life, the first thing which Allāh *taʿālā* will do to them is take a stock of their deeds and actions. They will be questioned about whatever they did in this world. They will be rewarded or punished according to their actions. Some people will be admitted into Paradise while others will be cast into Hell. All true and divinely revealed religions unanimously believe in the concept of the Hereafter. In the Qurʾān Allāh *taʿālā* repeatedly makes mention of belief in Him with belief in the Hereafter. In fact, the need for religion is based on the concept of the Hereafter, i.e. what is to happen after having passed

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[1] Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Usūl-e-Islam*, p. 25.

through this temporary world. As for those who do not believe in such a concept and are of the view that:

إِنْ هِيَ إِلاَّ حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوْتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوْثِيْنَ

There is nothing but our living in this world. We die and we live. We will not be raised again.[1]

Then such people have no need for a religion, nor do they have to become engaged in any discussions about the Resurrection, reward and punishment.

The Islamic belief is that after this life is another life which is actually the real life. Allāh *taʿālā* is the only truly and genuinely existing One. His power and will brought this universe from non-existence into a tangible and physical world. Its reality is nothing but an outward display. There will come a day when this entire universe will be lowered into the valley of death and obliteration by Allāh's will. This is known as the Resurrection. This will be followed by a third will of Allāh *taʿālā* when the entire creation will be removed from that valley of death and non-existence and brought to life once again. There will now be a new display of Allāh's will.

وَاِنَّ اِلٰى رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهٰى

Everything will have to return to your Sustainer.[2]

كُلٌّ اِلَيْنَا رَاجِعُوْنَ

All are to return to Us.

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[1] Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 37.
[2] Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 42.

In the definition of the Sharīʿat this is known as the Hashr.[1]

Taqdīr

The issue of taqdīr (fate and predestination) is a complex one. However, after accepting the existence of a Creator, it is even more difficult to reject this issue. The one who leaves the path of moderation as explained by the Sharīʿat has to reject guidance. In other words, he either had to accept that man is constrained like a rock, or he had to accept that he is equal to the Creator in the attribute of creating. A few points are presented here for you to ponder over. Even though the issue may not be solved through these points, it is possible that they will enable further discovery and exposition. We seek help from Allāh *taʿālā*.

The issue of taqdīr as explained in *Bayān al-Qur'ān*

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَ أَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنْذِرْهُمْ لاَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ

Surely those who have disbelieved, the same it is to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe.[2]

No one should be under the misconception that many unbelievers embrace īmān. The fact of the matter is that this verse does not refer to all unbelievers. Rather, it specifically refers to those

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[1] Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Usūl-e-Islam*, p. 108.
[2] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 6.

regarding whom Allāh *taʿālā* knows that they will die as unbelievers. This verse does not intend to state that there is no need to threaten them with Allāh's punishment and to convey His orders to them. This was the special task of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. What it actually means is that you should not worry about their embracing īmān and do not be grieved by their refusal. There is no hope of their embracing īmān. From this, it does not necessarily mean that it is futile to convey Allāh's orders to them, and how was a futile action placed on Rasūlullāh's shoulders? The fact is that a futile action refers to something in which there is no benefit whatsoever. Here, if these people are not going to benefit, let it be so; it will certainly be of benefit to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* because he will be receiving the reward for conveying the message. How, then, can it be futile!?

Another point is that since Allāh *taʿālā* already informed us that they will not believe – and we know that it is impossible for something opposite to what Allāh *taʿālā* said to occur – we should not consider them to be excused from embracing īmān.

This statement of Allāh *taʿālā* is similar to when a specialist physician says that a certain patient has reached the fourth level in tuberculosis and he will not recover from it. Obviously, the patient did not succumb to tuberculosis by the physician saying it. Rather, he is suffering from it from before due to some negligence on his part. In fact, the physician said it because he is already suffering from it.

In the same way, when Allāh *taʿālā* said that a certain unbeliever is not going to embrace īmān it is not because Allāh *taʿālā* said it, rather Allāh *taʿālā* said it because he is like that. His not being eligible

for īmān is because of his own mischievousness, obstinacy and opposition to the truth. For example, it is observed that when a person is bent on opposing another and spends all his time and efforts in this, then the ability to reconcile becomes less and less, until it becomes non-existent.

Similarly, Allāh *taʿālā* placed the ability for accepting the truth in every person from the time he was born, as mentioned in a Ḥadīth. But this person, due to his desires and personal motives, opposes the truth until a time comes when this ability disappears completely. At such a time, he reaches a condition in which a spiritual doctor can say that this person will not accept the truth because his innate capability is no longer existing. Now there is no rational objection to this.

A clear solution to the issue of taqdīr

Read the above lines several times because you will not find such a clear and simple solution to the issue of taqdīr even in large voluminous books provided you also have the will to understand it. I consider it appropriate to present to the reader the couplets of Ḥadrat ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *raḥimahullāh* on this subject. It has encompassed all the previous details in a very comprehensive and excellent manner. If you understood the previous details, you will be able to remember the answer to objections on this issue from these couplets.

أيا صاحبي إن الكلام بقدرتك – طويل وتحرير الخلاف يطول

My dear friend! The story of your strength is long. If details of the different creeds are also explained, the story will become much longer.

ففيك اختيار ليس منك وذالك – لجبر اختيار لا يكنك ذهول

Therefore listen to the gist of it. The power of choice has certainly been created in you, but you have no choice over this choice. Thus, there is compulsion here as well, but not on actions; on choice.

وأما اختيارمستقل فإنه – محال فلا يسألك عنه سؤل

As for an unfettered choice over which there is no compulsion, it is impossible for the creation. Neither can the creation become the Creator, nor can it receive independent choice. Therefore, no one who is desirous of it should ask you for it.

فأفعالنا منا على اختيارنا – ولكنها نحو القدير يؤل

Our actions emanate out of our choice and our will. However, since our power and choice are bestowed to us from the all-powerful One, our actions are attributed to Him as well.

وهذا هو الكسب الذي كلفوا به – وفيه اقتصاد فليكنك قبول

The difference between creation and earning as explained by Imām Mātirīdī raḥimahullāh is the same here, and this is the middle path. You should therefore accept it gladly.

ويثمر شر شر ما ينبغي له – فيزعمه الظلم الصريح جهول

As for the issue of reward and punishment, it is clear that evil results in evil; but an ignorant person considers it to be oppression.

كايراث خبث البذر خبث نباته – طباعا ولا يأتيه قال يقول

Look! If a spoilt seed is planted, will the tree not be spoilt like it? Now is there anyone who asks why did a spoilt tree sprout from it?

وليس جزاء ذاك عين فعالنا – ولكن سترًا حال سوف يزول

If you think about it, the thing which you consider to be recompense is not really recompense. Rather, they are those very same actions which you did in the world which will appear before you in the form of reward and punishment in Paradise and Hell. The veil which prevents you from seeing it in this world will be raised on the day of Resurrection, and you will see this point clearly then.

ولا يستوي الميزان إلا بخصلة – تفوت بأدنى ميلة فيعول

There is only one way the two pans of the scale can remain equal. The moment there is an inclination to one side, it will end. In the same way, as regards taqdīr, the pans of compulsion and choice have to be kept balanced. If not, you will be included among the Jabarīyyah or Qadarīyyah.

وصلى الله تعالى على خير خلقه وخيرته سيدنا محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا.

Salutations and peace of Allāh taʿālā to the best and choicest of His creations, our Master Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.[1]

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[1] *Riyāḍ as-Sunnah (Mulaqqab bi Futūḥāt Madanīyyah)*, vol. 2, p. 26.

The ʿiṣmat of the Prophets

The reality of ʿiṣmat

Imām Mātirīdī *raḥimahullāh* says that ʿiṣmat is that special bestowal and kindness of Allāh *taʿālā* which keeps the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* obedient to Allāh *taʿālā* all the time, and keeps them away from committing the slightest act of disobedience. However, it is not in the sense that the very strength and power to commit it is taken away from them, because when a person is made accountable, it is essential for the quality of choice to be maintained in him. This is so that the issue of reward and recompense remains sensible. The creation which does not have this quality has not been made accountable. Consequently, the issue of reward and punishment does not apply to it.

Ḥaḍrat Shāh Ismāʿīl Shahīd *raḥimahullāh* explains the above words of Imām Mātirīdī *raḥimahullāh* in his own simple words.

> The ʿiṣmat of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* means that Allāh *taʿālā* has preserved and protected their words, actions, worship, habits, dealings, character and conditions from the interference of the self and of Shayṭān, even if it be in the form of an error or forgetfulness. Allāh *taʿālā* places His angels with them to protect and keep watch over them so that even the soil of

humanness cannot taint their pure selves with the slightest blemish.[1]

The Prophets are maʿṣūm

Obviously, a person can only be a close associate of another if he is in line with his pleasure in every way. If even a single aspect of his life is against the temperament of the other, then whether he has all excellent qualities or not, they will be the same. If a person is extremely beautiful and handsome, but his one eye is squint or blind, his entire face becomes blemished on account of this one defect. In short, if a person has even a single characteristic which is against the other's pleasure, he will not be eligible for proximity and closeness. This is why it is essential for the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* to be total embodiments of obedience and for them not to have even a single thing which is contrary to Allāh's pleasure. This is why we say that the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* are maʿṣūm.

The meaning of ʿiṣmat

ʿIṣmat means that the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* do not even have the element within them to disobey Allāh *taʿālā* or to commit a sin. Bearing in mind that they have no evil quality whatsoever in them – in fact all their qualities are in line with Allāh's pleasure and will – it is normally impossible for them to commit a sin. This is because self-chosen actions are subservient to qualities. The type of quality a person has will determine the type of actions which will emanate from him. If he has the quality of generosity,

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[1] *Riyāḍ as-Sunnah (Mulaqqab bi Futūḥāt Madanīyyah)*, vol. 2, p. 215.

you will see him giving and gifting. If he has the quality of miserliness, he will be concerned about accumulating every single small item. If he has the quality of bravery in him, he will display courage, fortitude and resoluteness. If he is a coward, fleeing and submitting will disgrace him in this world. Thus, if a person is an embodiment of obedience, in whom there is no evil quality whatsoever, how can disobedience, rebellion and improper actions emanate from him?!

Yes, it is possible for the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* to – out of forgetfulness or misunderstanding – consider an act which is against Allāh's pleasure to be according to His pleasure or vice versa. However, this is not referred to as disobedience or sin. A sin is an act which is done wittingly and deliberately with the intention of disobedience. A mistake is referred to as a slip up. This is why when a person apologizes, he says: "I forgot" or "I misunderstood". If a mistake was also a sin, then this apology will be an acknowledgement of an error and not an apology.[1]

Ihsān

When Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* asked Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* about ihsān, he replied:

أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك.

That you worship Allāh taʿālā as though you are seeing Him. If you cannot see Him, then know for a fact that He is seeing you.

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[1] Maulānā Zafar Ahmad ʿUthmānī: *Wilādat Muhammadīyyah Kā Rāz*, p. 107.

I will first quote a text from *Tarjumān as-Sunnah* of Hadrat Maulānā Badr ʿĀlam Sāhib Muhājir Madanī *rahimahullāh* on the subject of ihsān. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* it contains unique sciences.

قال (جبرئيل عليه السلام) فأخبرني عن الإحسان، قال (رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم) أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك.

Hadrat Jibraʾīl ʿalayhis salām said: "Tell me what is ihsān?" Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam replied: "You must worship Allāh taʿālā with such focus and attention that it is as though you are seeing Him. Even though you do not see Him in reality, He certainly sees you in reality." (You must then worship Him with as much humility as demanded by this knowledge).

The above translation is based on the preferred explanation of ʿAllāmah Muhīy ad-Dīn Nawawī *rahimahullāh*. The gist of his explanation is that human nature makes a great distinction between presence and absence. When a servant has to carry out a task in the presence of his master, he will do it with humility, concentration and good etiquette. But once he moves away slightly from him, then all his natural willingness disappears and turns into shortcomings and misdemeanours. This difference of attitude is really a type of hypocrisy. The Sharīʿat wants to purify us of this defect and convey us to the lofty pedestal of genuine sincerity. This is why the above Hadīth states that it is the duty of a servant to become accustomed to such a type of worship in every situation and condition as though he is carrying it out in Allāh's presence. Obviously this depends on utilizing all the different forms of striving

and motivation to realize that we can see Allāh *taʿālā*. In fact, even in this condition of presence, carrying out an action beautifully and with due respect is due to us thinking that He is watching us. If we cannot worship Allāh *taʿālā* while imagining that we are seeing Him, we certainly have this knowledge that He is watching us. If this is the fundamental reason for humility and submission, and we have this knowledge [that He is watching us] all the time, there should be no difference between presence and absence.

اَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ بِاَنَّ اللهَ يَرٰى

Does he not know that Allāh is watching?

Hadrat Maulānā Badr ʿĀlam Muhājir Madanī *rahimahullāh* writes towards the end:

This Hadīth is popularly known as Hadīth-e-Jibraʾīl. It also contains a question about Islam and īmān. From the reply we learn that the word Islam is more connected to the external, and īmān to the internal. Based on this, īmān has a higher status than Islam. Islam without īmān is not worthy of consideration.

The Hadīth-e-Jibraʾīl was quoted by the author under the discussion on Hadīth number 241 which was narrated by Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. While explaining this Hadīth, the author delves into the subject of ihsān. It is also beneficial and enlightening. It is quoted here:

Hāfiz Fadlullāh Taurbashtī *rahimahullāh* says that this conversation [between Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām*] took place shortly before the Farewell Pilgrimage – not long before the termination of divine revelation and completion of Dīn. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* says

that it could have well taken place after the Farewell Pilgrimage. Their view is based on a narration of Ibn Mandah in which the following words are mentioned:

أن رجلا في آخر عمر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم جاء...[1]

A man came to Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam in the latter part of his life.

Both of the above views are possible when looking at the words "in the latter part of his life". Nonetheless, the point which is certainly clear is that this incident occurred towards the end of Rasūlullāh's life. Divine revelation was to come to a complete end forever. It was therefore necessary for the unlettered Arab nation to which Dīn was coming down gradually for the last 23 years to be given a short and comprehensive list. To this end, Allāh *taʿālā* selected His most dignified angel, made him to pose the most fundamental questions, and enabled Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to give the ultimate answers to those questions. In this way, the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* who were seated silently, heard a satisfying and convincing list of what Dīn entails.

This Ḥadīth states that there are three levels of Dīn, viz. the lowest, the middle and the highest. The first entails saying the kalimah shahādah, and embellishing it with the five pillars of Islam with one's external body parts even if the heart is not illuminated with the realities of īmān. The consequence of this incomplete submission will certainly cause a person to occasionally succumb to the veil of negligence and fall into disobedience. The

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[1] عمدة القاري: ٣٤٠.

Qur'ān expresses this type of faith in the following words:

قَالَتِ الْاَعْرَابُ اٰمَنَّا، قُلْ لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوْا وَلٰكِنْ قُوْلُوْا اَسْلَمْنَا، وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْاِيْمَانُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ.

The Bedouins say: "We have believed." Say: "You have not believed." Rather, you should say: "We have become Muslims." Īmān has not yet penetrated your hearts.[1]

The Bedouins say: "We have believed." You (O Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) say: Do not make this claim just yet. At present you only have external submission. Yes, it is hoped that Dīn will descend into your hearts in the future, after which your internal self will also be an embodiment of submission just as your external self is. This is known as īmān and it is the second or middle level of Dīn. On reaching this level, it becomes necessary to carry out and preserve the obligations, and to abstain from the prohibitions.

After this if Allāh *taʿālā* steers a fortunate person and he is able to progress further, he will reach the third level where there is no difference in the heart between presence and absence. While living in this world, the person is able to worship Allāh *taʿālā* in the veil of the unseen as though he can see Him. The Qur'ān makes reference to these three levels in the following verse:

[1] Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 14.

ثُمَّ اَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتٰبَ الَّذِيْنَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا، فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهٖ، وَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ، وَّمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِاِذْنِ اللهِ، ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيْرُ.

Then We made inheritors of the Book those whom We chose from among Our servants. There are from among them he who wrongs himself, among them he who follows a middle way, and among them he who has gone ahead with good deeds by the order of Allāh. This, indeed, is the supreme virtue.[1]

After this, even though the person does not acquire the ʿiṣmat which is enjoyed by the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*, he certainly inherits a sample of it. This third level is known as iḥsān.[2]

We now quote an explanation of iḥsān from an Arab scholar by the name of Muḥammad ibn Riyāḍ al-Aḥmad al-Atharī from his book *al-Iklīl Sharḥ Ḥadīth Jibraʾīl*.

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك.

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam replied: "That you must worship Allāh taʿālā with such focus and attention that it is as though you are seeing Him. Even though you do not see Him in reality, He certainly sees you in reality."

Iḥsān is the opposite of isā'ah (to do bad). Iḥsān means that a person must bring good into existence

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[1] Sūrah al-Fāṭir, 35: 32.
[2] *Tarjumān as-Sunnah*, vol. 1, p. 503.

and desist from evil. The good must be spent on Allāh's servants through one's wealth, knowledge, position and body. (In other words, he must spend his wealth for the works and needs of Allāh's servants, quench their thirst for knowledge, be of assistance in matters related to position and authority if he can, and serve them physically).

Spending one's wealth in charity

Thus, a person must spend his wealth, give in charity and pay zakāh. The most superior form of monetary ihsān is the paying of zakāh. This is because it is one of the pillars of Islam, and one of its supreme foundations. A person's Islam is completed and perfected through zakāh. It is the most beloved form of spending in Allāh's sight. Close to it are all those expenses which are obligatory on man to spend on. In other words, on his wife, parents, children, brothers, sisters, their children, his maternal and paternal uncles and aunties, and so on. This is followed by spending on the poor and needy. Students of Dīn are also among those on whom one should spend.

Good works in matters related to power and authority

People are of different levels. Some are close to the king. They must use this position, for example by interceding before the king if someone requests intercession. Such people could also repulse harm from the person. Another way is to draw the people of authority towards goodness.

The meaning of conveying academic benefit

It entails offering your wealth to Allāh's servants in gatherings, special and general assemblies, and teaching them goodness and Allāh-consciousness even if you are sitting and having tea with them. If there is a general assembly, then convey knowledge to the people there. However, it is necessary to be wise and prudent in these situations so that your presence is not seen as a burden by them in the sense that the moment everyone is seated, you start teaching them and speaking about religious matters. When advising the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to give due consideration to their tiredness and boredom. He would not speak for too long because humans become tired and bored. When this happens, it results in weakness. Too much of a good thing is sometimes disliked. Sometimes when people speak too much about goodness, people begin to dislike goodness itself.

The meaning of physical iḥsān

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that helping a person to get onto his conveyance or loading his goods onto it is also a form of charity in your favour. Helping such a person entails loading him and his goods onto his conveyance, or giving him directions. All other similar actions are included in iḥsān and entail kindness towards Allāh's servants.

The meaning of iḥsān in worship

This means that you must worship Allāh *taʿālā* as though you are seeing Him, as stated by Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Worship of this nature will be considered to be a worship carried out with

enthusiasm and yearning. Worship with enthusiasm and yearning is when the self prompts the person towards worship. This is because it only desires what it loves. This is why it reminds him constantly. It is as though Allāh *taʿālā* is right before it. It therefore seeks His pleasure and then acquires His proximity.

The meaning of "If you cannot see Him, then know for a fact that He is seeing you"

If you cannot imagine Allāh's presence, you should at least believe that He is watching you. Worship of this nature will be referred to as a worship of affirmation and fear. This is why it is a lower level of ihsān. If you cannot worship Allāh *taʿālā* as though He is right before your eyes, while you are seeking Him and your self is also prompting you towards Him, then worship Him as though He is seeing you. Your worship in this way will be like the worship of a fearful person, and like the one who is fleeing from His punishment. This is a lower level of worship from the original form.

ʿAllāmah Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* says that the worship of Allāh *taʿālā* and the worship of the Merciful one must be based on absolute love for Him and total submission of the servant. These two – i.e. intense love for Allāh *taʿālā* and total submission of the servant – are the fundamentals of worship.

Worship is based on two things: (1) Intense love for Allāh *taʿālā* in one's heart. (2) The servant must consider himself to be absolutely nothing. There is yearning in love and fear in submission. This is what ihsān in Allāh's worship entails.

If a person continues worshipping Allāh *taʿālā* as described above, he will very quickly become His devoted servant. Such a person will not be ostentatious, will not desire name and fame among

people, and will not want their praises. Whether people come to know of the nature of his worship or not, his worship will remain the same. He will carry it out with sincerity and devotion in every condition. In fact, the perfection of his sincerity will be when he hopes that people do not come to know of his worship and it is done secretly with his Sustainer. Yes, its announcement can be advantageous to the Muslims or to Islam itself. For example, the worshipper is one whom the masses follow and emulate. He wants his worship to be known to them so that his friends and associates may emulate him in this manner of worship. There is good in it and attention should be given to this advantageous angle. It could prove to be superior to and better than worship done in secrecy.

This is why Allāh *taʿālā* praises those who spend their wealth in secrecy and in public. When a person realizes that carrying out worship in secrecy is effective in rectifying his heart, is beneficial to it, and is more effective in humility before Allāh *taʿālā* and turning to Him; then he does it in privacy. And when the situation is such that a public form of worship has the advantage of displaying the Sharīʿat, and will be advantageous to Islam and the Muslims; he worships Allāh *taʿālā* publicly. A true believer looks at what is more effective for rectification. The angle of worship which will be more beneficial will obviously be superior. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.[1]

[1] *Al-Iklīl Sharh Hadīth Jibraʾīl*, pp. 18-20.

A comprehensive and enlightening explanation of ihsān

By Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd al-Ghanī Sāhib Phūlpūrī *rahimahullāh*, khalīfah of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*.

Linguistically ihsān means to create beauty and goodness in a thing. The root of this word is husn – beauty. In the definition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, ihsān refers to a certain type of imagination and meditation. In other words, in every act of worship a servant has this thought in his heart that his true object of worship, his Master, Creator and the Sustainer of the entire universe is watching him. Although we are not blind, we do not have the ability to see Allāh *taʿālā* with these eyes. However, because He is definitely seeing us, it is as though we too are seeing Him. This is similar to a blind person meeting a person who has vision. When the blind person returns to his house-folk, he informs them that he saw such and such person. Although he did not really see the other person, it will be said as though he saw him. In the Hereafter Allāh *taʿālā* will give these eyes the ability to see Him. In this world, these eyes are being made through the rays of īmān, Islam and ihsān. They will be made in this world and be opened in the Hereafter.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent explanation of this reality. (compiler)

There is a glaring connection between the linguistic and terminological meaning of ihsān. Beauty in a person's īmān and Islam is only realized when the spirit of ihsān enters him. Ikhlās is another name for ihsān. As regards the reality, the two are the same. Ihsān in īmān is required, and so is ihsān in Islam.

Ihsān in Islam – i.e. in the kalimah shahādat, salāh, fasting, hajj, zakāh – will be achieved when these obligations are carried out while thinking and imagining that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching us. Whatever moments are passed in negligence of this thinking – whether moments when saying the kalimah shahādat, performing salāh, keeping fast, paying zakāh – are not counted as moments of obedience and servitude.

The same can be said of ihsān in īmān. The heart is the repository of īmān. The more this meditation in the heart that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching us, the more firm, perfect and complete the īmān will be. Whatever moments are passed in negligence of this thinking will be counted as being devoid of ihsān in the person's īmān. Ihsān is the soul of all the pillars of īmān and Islam. In the absence of the feeling of ihsān and the soul of worship, the act of worship will be fulfilled but there will be no beauty in it. The form will be there but not the spirit.

The servitude which is alluded to in the words "that you worship Allāh" is a servitude and a slavery which is never separated from the servant and slave. A slave remains a slave all the time. A servant is a servant all the time. He is a servant when he is in salāh, and also a servant when he is buying and selling in the business places, when he is eating and drinking, when he goes to sleep and when he wakes up. He is Allāh's slave until eternity. A labourer is sometimes a labourer and sometimes not. An employee is an employee sometimes and sometimes not. But a slave is never free from the bondage of slavery and servitude. He is born a servant. Being a servant has been placed within him.

The slavery and servitude which is mentioned in the words "that you worship Allāh" is inside the servant at every breath he takes. He is a servant from the time he is born until he dies – at every moment of activity and inactivity of his life. Thus, to embed this meditation and thinking in one's heart is not specific to the definitional and popular meaning of worship. Rather, it has to be with a person at every moment. He has to think to himself that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching him when he is walking, when he is speaking, when he is looking with his eyes, in his manner of speech, and so on. He has to be aware of his servitude and position as a slave. This can be included in every breath he takes.

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said to me on one occasion: "There is a station which is higher than ikhlās (sincerity and devotion)." He then explained: "It is the station of fanāʾīyyat (self-obliteration). Allāh *taʿālā* cast its explanation in my heart that when it comes to ikhlās, a servant is conscious of his existence in his actions. Although "as though you can see Him" is realized fully, a slight spark of turning to Allāh *taʿālā* remains. I have done this action by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*. The "I" in this statement is not blameworthy but praiseworthy. However, there is yet a station which is higher than this. The Sufis refer to it as fanā' al-fanā'. It means that you must obliterate yourself completely. Whatever good deeds you carried out through these limbs which are loaned to you must not – in the least – be attributed to yourself. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

مَآ أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللّٰهِ ۘ وَمَآ أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَّفْسِكَ

Whatever good reaches you, it is from Allāh. Whatever harm afflicts you, it is from your self.[1]

The more firmly ihsān is embedded in the heart, the stronger the level of servitude. The strongest level of ihsān whereby a person is never unmindful of Allāh *taʿālā* and is always aware that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching him is enjoyed specifically by the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. They are always aware of it in the most complete and perfect degree. As for the Auliyā', there are moments when they become unmindful of this, but they make up for it through seeking forgiveness. Nonetheless, the extent and nature of their ihsān is still stronger and higher than that of the masses.

Some commentators of Hadīth explain two levels of ihsān from this Hadīth. One is that we are seeing Allāh *taʿālā*, and the other is that Allāh *taʿālā* is seeing us. However, I have heard from my Hadīth teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Mājid ʿAlī Sāhib Jaunpūrī *raḥimahullāh*, that when his teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī *raḥimahullāh*, explained it, he said that the Hadīth scholars made a judgemental error when they said that there are two levels of ihsān. He says that the letter *fā* in *Fa'in lam takun tarāhu* is for taʿlīl (to demonstrate a reason).

The Hadīth will therefore translate thus: Serve Allāh *taʿālā* in such a way as though you are seeing Him because if you are not seeing Him, He is seeing you.

Thus, if His looking is certain and absolute, it is as though you are also seeing Him. If worship is done with this thought in mind, it will be pure from ostentation. The demand for ihsān commences from

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 79.

the time a person turns mature and continues to the last moment of his life. Let alone the masses, even the scholars are under the assumption that the imagination that we are seeing Allāh *taʿālā* is confined to salāh and recitation of the Qur'ān. Whereas, from the following words of the Qur'ān, it becomes clear that we are ordered to fulfil the duty of a slave and of servitude until death:

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتّٰى يَاْتِيَكَ الْيَقِيْنُ

Continue worshipping your Sustainer until the inevitable [death] comes to you.[1]

Every breath of a slave is a slave. Whether he is busy engaged in business in the bazaar or conversing with people, he is mindful of the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching him. Whether it be in the tone of his speech, the blinking of his eyes, the way he sits or the manner in which he walks; he is on his guard and he checks whether servitude and slavery are found in him, or whether the subtle sparks of pride and egotism are also included.

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِيْنَ يَمْشُوْنَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَّإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجٰهِلُوْنَ قَالُوْا سَلٰمًا.

The servants of the Merciful are they who walk humbly on earth. When the ignorant ones address them, they reply: "Peace!"[2]

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[1] Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 99.
[2] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 63.
Maulānā ʿAbd al-Ghanī Sāhib Phūlpūrī: *Iḥsān Kiyā Hei.*

The extent of ihsān

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَاَحْسِنْ كَمَا اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ

Do good [to others] as Allāh has done good to you.[1]

People erroneously attach ihsān to wealth, affluence and other major things; and assume that poor people can do no ihsān. The fact is that to do good to people does not require wealth; it requires a heart. Its extent is vast.

Hadrat Barrā' ibn ʿĀzib *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* relates: A Bedouin came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and said: "O Rasūlullāh! Show me something which if I do I will enter Paradise." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Your statement may be very short, but your question is vast. Free those who are enslaved and emancipate the necks." The man said: "O Rasūlullāh! Are these two not the same?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "No. If you alone free a person, then you have removed him from slavery. If you join someone else and help him monetarily to free someone, then you have released his neck. You must continue spending [in charity], and be good to your relatives who wrong you. If you cannot do this much, then feed the hungry, provide drink to the thirsty, enjoin good and prohibit evil. If you cannot do this much, you should at least restrain yourself from everything but good."[2]

Hadrat Abū Dharr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked: "O Rasūlullāh! Teach me an action together with īmān." He replied: "Give some of the sustenance which Allāh

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[1] Sūrah al-Qasas, 28: 77.
[2] *Al-Mustadrak*.

taʿālā gave you to others." He asked: "O Rasūlullāh! What if the person is himself a pauper?" He replied: "He must do righteous deeds with his tongue." He asked: "What if he cannot talk?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "He must help the downtrodden." He asked: "What if he is weak and cannot help him?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "He must carry out the task of the one who cannot carry it out." He asked: "What if the person himself is just as incapable?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "He must save the people from his own offences."[1]

Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhīyyah

By Hadrat Maulānā Shāh ʿAbd al-Ghanī Sāhib Phūlpūrī *rahimahullāh*.

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم، أما بعد. أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم. بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم.

Qur'ānic verses on maʿīyyat-e-ilāhīyyah

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ اللهَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا وَّالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ مُّحْسِنُوْنَ

Surely Allāh is with those who are righteous and those who do virtuous deeds.[2]

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ اَيْنَمَا كُنْتُمْ

He is with you wherever you are.[1]

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[1] *Al-Mustadrak. Tafsīrī Nukāt*, vol. 1, p. 498.
[2] Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 128.

وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصَّادِقِيْنَ

Remain with the truthful ones.[2]

The above verses are from different places in the Qur'ān. The first two verses give us the glad tidings of Allāh's maʿīyyat (i.e. Allāh *taʿālā* is with us). The third verse shows us how to acquire this maʿīyyat. One of the accepted principles of tafsīr is that the Qur'ān explains itself. From the combination of these verses from different places, a major branch of learning is acquired, viz. the way to acquire the maʿīyyat of Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh *taʿālā* is all-wise. He has a bond of mercy and affection with His servants. Had He confined Himself to giving the glad tidings of His maʿīyyat and not shown the way to its acquisition, there would have been many of His servants who would have given their lives out of anxiety and restlessness. Nonetheless, His unlimited mercy demanded that while giving His servants various glad tidings, He also showed them the way of acquiring them. When issuing His orders and injunctions, He even showed them easy methods of carrying them out. Allāh is the Lord of the universe; He has a strong bond of mercy and love with His servants. Allāh *taʿālā* Himself says:

وَاللّٰهُ رَؤُفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

Allāh is extremely kind to His servants.

He has the love of nurturing them and the love of creating them.[3]

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[1] Sūrah al-Ḥadīd.
[2] Sūrah at-Taubah.
[3] *Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī*, p. 10.

Types of maʿīyyat

There are several types of Allāh's maʿīyyat. One type is with the entire universe.

وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيْطٌ

Allāh encompasses everything.

Based on the general nature of this verse, the entire creation enjoys the maʿīyyat of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat ʿĀrif *rahimahullāh* conveys this theme in the following couplets:

> The bond of creation and providing sustenance is enjoyed by all the creations. However, the closeness of divine revelation and divine love is enjoyed by special servants. There are many categories of closeness. Like the rays of the sun take on one form when they strike a mountain, and a different hue when they strike on gold.

The various creatures on land and sea – every one of them have a different type of maʿīyyat with Allāh *taʿālā*. Every member of the different classes of creation enjoys a different type of maʿīyyat with Allāh *taʿālā*. The nurturing and training of each one is also different. The beautiful names of Allāh *taʿālā* focus on each of the different types of maʿīyyat. When a certain creation requires a certain type of training, then the beautiful name of Allāh *taʿālā* which is appropriate to that type of training will focus on that creation. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللّٰهَ أَوِ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمٰنَ ط أَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُوْا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنٰى

Say: Whether you invoke Him as Allāh or as the Merciful, by whichever name you invoke Him, to Him belongs the best names.[1]

The effect of Allāh's beautiful names

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes that when a servant has a need, he must select that name of Allāh *ta'ālā* which is appropriate to his need and then repeat that excessively. He will realize his objective very quickly. For example, a person is in poverty. He must repeat *Yā Mughnī* (O the one who gives wealth). Similarly, if he suffering from weakness, he must repeat *Yā Qawī* (O the powerful One). A person must seek Allāh's assistance for every need in this way.[2]

The universe and Allāh's beautiful names

The system of this entire universe is standing on Allāh's beautiful names. Every living creature is receiving life through the name Muhyī. Every existing thing is in existence through the name Qayyūm. The life and continued existence of every single thing is standing through the blessings of Allāh's attributes of *qayyūmīyyat* (maintaining of life) and *ihyā'* (giving of life). Every speck of the universe receives new life at every moment of its life, but the masses are ignorant of this bestowal of every moment. This is similar to how rain drops fall from the clouds. Each drop falls down separately, but because they are falling one after the other, it seems to us that a line of water is falling. We do not perceive each individual drop separately. The true recognizers of Allāh *ta'ālā*

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[1] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 110.
[2] *Ma'īyyat-e-Ilāhī*, p. 20.

observe the splendorous manifestations of the attributes of Allāh *taʿālā* on every speck by virtue of their insight.[1]

Different types of maʿīyyat based on different times and climes

A servant is at one and the same time a creation, one who enjoys Allāh's mercy and receives sustenance from Him. If he commits a sin, the maʿīyyat is accompanied with Allāh's anger. If he repents and cries before Him, the nature of the maʿīyyat changes. It is now a maʿīyyat of repentance, forgiveness and mercifulness. With a single servant, different types of maʿīyyat can be experienced depending on the time and place. The nature of Allāh's maʿīyyat when the person is engaged in dhikr, Qur'ān recitation and optional salāh is different from the maʿīyyat when he is carrying out obligatory duties. Allāh's maʿīyyat with the patient ones is different from what it is with those who are fasting, and different from what it is with those performing hajj. Allāh's maʿīyyat is in line with the type of action which the person is doing in Dīn. The maʿīyyat in rukūʿ is stronger than the maʿīyyat when he is standing in salāh. And it is the highest when he is in prostration. The maʿīyyat also differs on the basis of an increase or decrease in the person's sincerity and devotion. Each servant experiences a different maʿīyyat from the next servant. The maʿīyyat with the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* is of a different level. With the truthful it is of another type. With the righteous it is of another level. The maʿīyyat which is experienced by the Ahlullāh is

[1] *Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī*, p.23.

referred to as maʿīyyat-e-khāssah (a special maʿīyyat) by the Sufis.[1]

Convictional īmān

The more the veils of the carnal self are removed through striving and spiritual exercises, the more Allāh's maʿīyyat is exposed to the heart. This is when īmān taḥqīqī (convictional īmān) is realized. Before this, the īmān is merely rational and evidential. Ḥadrat ʿĀrif *raḥimahullāh* says:

> The legs of those who only demand evidences are of wood. And wooden legs are very weak.

Proof for the need for the company of the pious

The company of the pious is so necessary and important that the following order was revealed to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهُ

Keep yourself with those who invoke their Sustainer morning and evening, seeking His countenance.[2]

In this verse Allāh *taʿālā* makes it categorically necessary for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to be in the company of the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* so that he could see to their training and rectification. This, notwithstanding the fact that they were Arabs; they could have read the Qur'ān themselves and understood its meanings to a certain extent. They could have also learnt the injunctions of Islam from individuals. However, Allāh *taʿālā* clearly

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[1] *Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī*, p. 26.
[2] Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 28.

stated His continued practice and norm that success cannot be realized without the company of the chosen and accepted ones. The verses address Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* thus: O Our Messenger! We know that you are Our true beloved and lover. Your heart wants to sit in total seclusion and engage in Our remembrance all the time. I know for a fact that your blessed heart has no place for any friend apart from Myself. Nonetheless, you must compel your heart into giving time to your Companions. We sent you as a mercy to the entire universe, as the chief of all the Messengers and the seal of all Prophets. By virtue of your pure companionship, such great personalities will be produced who will take care of the caliphate on the system of prophet-hood, and regarding whom We have been speaking about in the Taurāh and Injīl.

After saying "keep yourself", Allāh *taʿālā* says that those whose company I am asking you to remain in are the ones who engage in the remembrance of their Lord. They are hungry and thirsty for your Lord's happiness and pleasure. We are fully aware of the intensity of their hunger and thirst, We testify to it by saying:

وَالَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا اَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلّٰهِ

Those who are believers are most intense in their love for Allāh.

It is their quest, hunger and thirst for Me which has brought them to you. Look at what mothers do:

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ اَوْلَادَهُنَّ

Mothers must breastfeed their children.

If this is what they do, you are the mercy to the worlds. Their quest and thirst demand that you spend your valuable time on them in order to fill their chests and hearts with the blessing of messenger-ship and the effulgence of prophet-hood.

The words "those who invoke their Sustainer" has made it easy for you to act on this order because they are not outsiders and strangers; they are those who remember their Sustainer. As for your time of seclusion, We have set aside the night for that purpose:

اِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ الَّيْلِ هِيَ اَشَدُّ وَطْاً وَّاَقْوَمُ قِيْلًا. اِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيْلًا.

Surely waking up at night has the strongest impression and the word comes out most upright. Surely you have lengthy occupations by day.[1]

هُوَ الَّذِيْ بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيّٖنَ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ، وَإِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِيْ ضَلَالٍ مُّبِيْنٍ.

It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. And before this they were lying in manifest error.[2]

The Saḥābah's ability to make tablīgh on the system of prophet-hood

By virtue of the maʿīyyat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, the Saḥābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*

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[1] Sūrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 6-7.
[2] Sūrah al-Jumuʿah, 62: 2.
Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī, p. 33.

reached that lofty level whereby every Sahābī developed the ability to invite to Allāh *taʿālā* with insight. The Qur'ān testifies to the fact that their tablīgh was on the system of prophet-hood:

قُلْ هٰذِهٖ سَبِيْلِيْٓ اَدْعُوْٓا اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۣ عَلٰى بَصِيْرَةٍ اَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِيْ

Say: This is my path. I invite towards Allāh with insight, I and whoever is with me.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says: "and whoever is with me". What type of togetherness is this? It is a togetherness through whose blessing every Sahābī is with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in calling and inviting towards Allāh *taʿālā*. It is really the miracle of the companionship and pure maʿīyyat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which conferred to them the ability to invite towards Allāh *taʿālā* with insight – those very same people who:

وَاِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ

And before this they were lying in manifest error.

Rasūlullāh's insightful gaze conferred an insightful gaze to the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* as well as is clearly stated in the verse under discussion. In other words, inviting towards Allāh *taʿālā* with insight is primarily found in Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and secondarily found in the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

اَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِيْ

I and whoever is with me.[1]

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[1] Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 108.

The loftiness of the ʿārifīn is due to their realization of maʿīyyat with Allāh

When the ʿārifīn realize and perceive the maʿīyyat of Allāh *taʿālā* through the effulgence of their excessive dhikr and spiritual striving, they surpass the masses in their courage and fortitude even though they neither own material riches nor have armies under their control. Even if they experience poverty, they are happy and pleased. Their understanding becomes effulgent, they convince the self by saying to it: I am ill while Allāh *taʿālā* is the physician. I am a patient of His clinic. It is to my benefit to remain in the condition in which He keeps me. Despite this poverty and constriction, mighty kings and sultans are awe-struck and intimidated by them. A poet says:

> This is the awe of Allāh, not of the creation. It is not the awe of this one in rags.

Their condition testifies to their internal spiritual strength. A poet says in this regard:

> Do not look at my pale face because I have legs of steel. What do you know of what king I have as a friend within me!?

At the time of the Hijrah, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and Hadrat Abū Bakr Siddīq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* concealed themselves in a certain cave. The unbelievers searched for them with an intent to kill them. They reached the mouth of this cave and tried to look inside. Despite enjoying the special rank of a Siddīq, the special maʿīyyat of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* could not bear this terrifying scene and he said: "O Rasūlullāh!

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[1] *Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī*, p. 46.

What will happen now?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "O Abū Bakr! Do not worry. Allāh is with us."

Look at his level of conviction and reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*! How can an ordinary follower ever enjoy the maʿīyyat which was in the blessed heart of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*! No follower can ever bear the maʿīyyat which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* enjoys. Although the rank of Siddīq is the highest form of Wilāyat, there is a major difference between the maʿīyyat of a Rasūl and the maʿīyyat of a Siddīq. The highest level of maʿīyyat which is reached by a Siddīq cannot even equal the most primary level of maʿīyyat which is enjoyed by the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām.*[1]

Rasūlullāh's fundamental temperament was total seclusion

Another point which is learnt from the words "keep yourself with…" is that Rasūlullāh's fundamental temperament was that he loved seclusion with Allāh *taʿālā*. We learn from this that if a person has a natural inclination for seclusion but compels himself to fulfil the task of guiding and steering the seekers, then he is the truly genuine person qualified to be a reformer and mentor. He himself is fully aware, and he makes others the same.

اَلرَّحْمٰنُ فَاسْئَلْ بِهٖ خَبِيْرًا

Ask a person who is fully aware about the status of the Merciful [Allāh].[2]

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[1] *Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī*, p. 73.
[2] *Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī*, p. 124.

Observe the following Aḥādīth with reference to the maʿīyyat of Allāh *taʿālā*:

روى أبو نعيم بسنده في الحلية عن مالك بن دينار قال قال موسى عليه السلام أين أبغيك؟ قال عند منكسرة قلوبهم.

Abū Nuʿaym raḥimahullāh relates with his transmission in al-Ḥilyah on the authority of Mālik ibn Dīnār who said: Mūsā ʿalayhis salām asked: "O Allāh! Where should I search for You?" Allāh taʿālā replied: "By the broken-hearted."

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول الله تعالى: أنا عند ظن عبدي بي، وأنا معه حين يذكرني، فإن ذكرني في نفسه ذكرته في نفسي، وإن ذكرني في ملأ ذكرته في ملأ خير منهم، وان قترب إلي شبرا اقتربت منه ذراعا، وإن اقترب إلي ذراعا اقتربت إليه باعا، وإن أتاني يمشي أتيته هرولة.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurayrah raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Allāh taʿālā says: I am with My special servant according to My rank. I am with him when he remembers Me (I treat him with My special mercy). When he remembers Me in his heart (in privacy), I remember him in My heart (I do not forget him). When he remembers Me in an assembly, I remember him in a better assembly (I speak about him in an assembly of angels and I inform them that a certain servant is remembering Me among a group of people). If he comes close to Me by one hand span (through good actions) I go closer to

[1] سنن الترمذي، رقم ٣٦٢٣.

him by one arm's length. If he comes to Me by one arm's length, I go to him by stretching out both My hands. If he comes walking towards Me, I go running towards him.[1]

Fear and hope

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

أُولٰئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ يَبْتَغُوْنَ إِلٰى رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيْلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُوْنَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُوْنَ عَذَابَهُ ط إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُوْرًا.

Those to whom these people call are themselves searching for a means to their Sustainer, as to which of them is the nearest. They hope for His mercy and fear His punishment. Surely the punishment of your Sustainer is something to be feared.[2]

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَيَرْجُوْنَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُوْنَ عَذَابَهُ

They hope for His mercy and they fear His punishment.

Ḥaḍrat Sahl ibn ʿAbdillāh said that being hopeful of Allāh's mercy and fearful of His punishment are two different conditions in man. When they are maintained with equilibrium, man treads the correct path. If either of the two gains the upper-hand, then man's conditions are damaged accordingly.[3]

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[1] *Tuḥfah al-Almaʿī*, vol. 8, p. 256.
[2] Sūrah Banī Isrāʾīl, 17: 57.
[3] Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qurʾān*, vol. 5, p. 499.

The servitude of pious personalities

The righteous servants of Allāh *taʿālā*, His close friends, the pious elders, the Prophets, and the angels whom the polytheists consider to be equals with Allāh *taʿālā* and have been worshipping them and continue to worship them are of such a level of servitude, submission, and turning to Allāh *taʿālā* that they are hopeful of Allāh's mercy and fearful of His punishment. If this is the condition of these pure personalities, how can they be the fulfillers of your needs and the removers of your difficulties?

Fear and hope are two fundamental demands and important displays of servitude and worship. It is through hope that a person is able to engage in excessive worship, and through fear that he protects himself from sins. The above verse clearly teaches us that the pure personalities whom these people believe to be partners with Allāh *taʿālā* and consider them to be the fulfillers of their needs are in fact seeking Allāh's proximity all the time. They hope for His mercy and are fearful of His punishment. Why should they not fear when Allāh's punishment is such that it has to be feared, no matter how high a status a person may enjoy. A servant's excellence lies in his remaining within the boundaries and limits of servitude and worship. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

عن أنس بن مالك قال دخل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على شاب وهو في الموت، فقال كيف تجدك؟ قال أرجو الله يا رسول الله وأخاف

[1] Maulānā Abū Ṯāhir Muḥammad Is-ḥāq Khān: *ʿUmdah al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, vol. 3, p. 709.

ذنوبي. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا يجتمعان (الخوف والرجاء) في قلب عبد في مثل هذا الموطن (الاحتضار) إلا أعطاه الله الذي يرجو وأمنه من الذي يخاف. (ابن ماجه).

Hadrat Anas radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam went to visit a youngster who was on the verge of dying. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam asked him: "How do you feel?" He replied: "O Rasūlullāh! I have hope in Allāh's pardon and I fear my sins." Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "When these two qualities (hope and fear) are found in the heart of a servant in a situation like this (when he is in the throes of death), Allāh taʿālā most certainly gives him what he hopes for and gives his security against what he fears.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh created an angel having a wing extending till the east and a wing extending till the west. Its head is beneath the throne [of Allāh] while its legs are beneath the seventh earth. It has feathers equal to the number of the creation of Allāh. When a man or woman from my ummat sends salutations to me, Allāh commands this angel to dive in an ocean of light which is beneath the throne. It dives into this ocean and emerges. It flaps its wings causing a drop [of water] to fall from each and every feather. Allāh then creates from every drop, an angel who seeks forgiveness for him [who sent salutations upon me] till the day of Resurrection."[1]

Some wise men have said that the soundness of the body lies in less food, the soundness of the soul lies

[1] Al-Ghazzālī: *Mukāshafah al-Qulūb*.

in abstaining from sins and the soundness of one's Islam lies in sending salutations to the best of the creation [Muḥammad].

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ

O you who believe! Fear Allāh, and a soul should be mindful of what it has sent forth for tomorrow.

In other words, what deeds it has done for the day Resurrection. This means that you should give in charity and do acts of obedience so that you may get the reward thereof on the day of Resurrection.

وَاتَّقُوا اللهَ إِنَّ اللهَ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ

Fear Allāh, for surely Allāh is fully aware of all that you do.[1]

This is because the angels, the skies, the earth, the night and the day will all bear testimony on the day of Resurrection as regards what man did – be it good or evil, acts of obedience or acts of disobedience. So much so that even his body parts will bear testimony against him. The earth will bear testimony in favour of a believer and ascetic person. The earth will say: "He offered ṣalāh on me, he kept fast, he performed the pilgrimage, he waged jihād." On hearing this, the believer and ascetic person will be overjoyed.

The earth will also bear testimony against the unbeliever and sinner. It will say: "He performed acts of polytheism on me, he committed adultery, consumed intoxicants and he consumed the unlawful." O destruction on such a person if the

[1] Sūrah al-Ḥashr, 59: 18.

most Merciful of those who show mercy were to interrogate him in the accounting of his deeds.

A true believer is he who fears Allāh with every part of his body. The jurist Abū al-Layth *rahimahullāh* said: An indication of fear of Allāh manifests itself in seven things.

(1) His tongue which prevents him from lying, backbiting, slander, false accusation and vain talk. At the same time, it keeps him preoccupied in the remembrance of Allāh, the recitation of the Qur'ān and acquisition of knowledge.

(2) His heart from which enmity, slander and jealousy towards one's fellow brothers comes out. This is because jealously wipes out good deeds. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

الحسد يأكل الحسنات كما تأكل النار الحطب

Jealousy devours good deeds just as the fire devours fire wood.

You should know that jealousy is from among the major ailments in the hearts. And the ailments of the hearts cannot be treated except through knowledge and practising on that knowledge.

(3) His eyes. He should not look at the unlawful be it of food, drink, clothing and other things. He should neither look at this world with desire. Rather, when he looks at this world, it should be by way of contemplation. He should neither look at the things which are unlawful to him.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

من ملأ عينه من الحرام ملأ الله تعالى يوم القيامة عينه من النار

He who fills his eyes with the unlawful, Allāh will fill his eyes on the day of Resurrection with the fire.

(4) His stomach. Nothing unlawful should go into his stomach, for this is a major sin. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

إذا وقعت لقمة من الحرام في بطن ابن آدم لعنه كل ملك في الأرض والسماء ما دامت تلك اللقمة في بطنه، وإن مات على تلك الحالة فمأواه جهنم.

When a morsel of unlawful food goes into the stomach of a person, every angel in the earth and heaven curses him as long as that morsel remains in his stomach. If he dies in that state, his abode is Hell.

(5) His hand. He should not extend his hand towards anything that is unlawful. Rather, he should extend it towards all that entails the obedience of Allāh. It is narrated from Kaʿb al-Aḥbār that he said: "Allāh created a mansion of green chrysolite. This mansion has 70 000 houses and each house has 70 000 rooms. None shall enter this mansion except he to whom the unlawful was offered but he shunned it out of the fear of Allāh."

(6) His feet. He should not walk towards the disobedience of Allāh. He should rather walk towards the obedience and pleasure of Allāh. And towards sitting in the company of the 'ulamā' and the righteous servants of Allāh.

(7) His worship. His worship should be solely for the sake of Allāh. He should fear ostentation and hypocrisy. If he does all this, he will be from among those regarding whom Allāh said:

وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ

The Hereafter with your Sustainer is for those who constantly fear Him.[1]

He says:

اِنَّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ فِيْ مَقَامٍ اَمِيْنٍ

Those who constantly fear Him shall be in a place of security.[2]

It is as though Allāh is saying that on the day of Resurrection they will be saved from the fire. It is the duty of a believer to possess both fear and hope. He should hope for the mercy of Allāh and should not despair of it. Allāh says:

لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللهِ

Do not despair of the mercy of Allāh.[3]

He should worship Allāh, abstain from evil deeds and repent to Allāh.

While Dāwūd *ʿalayhis salām* was sitting in his room reciting the Zabūr, he saw a red insect on the ground. He thought to himself: "What was the purpose of Allāh in creating this insect?" Allāh gave this insect the power to speak and so it said: "O Prophet of Allāh! As for my days, my Sustainer has inspired me to say:

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَالْحَمْدُ للهِ وَلَا إِلٰهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ

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[1] Sūrah az-Zukhruf, 43: 35.
[2] Sūrah ad-Dukhān, 44: 52.
[3] Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 26: 28.

Glory to Allāh. All praise to Allāh. There is none worthy of worship but Allāh. Allāh is the greatest.

A thousand times each day. As for my nights, my Sustainer has inspired me to say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ وَعَلٰى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ

O Allāh! Send salutations and peace on Muḥammad, the unlettered Prophet, his family and his Companions.

A thousand times each night. As for you, what do you say whereby I could benefit from you?" Dāwūd *ʿalayhis salām* regretted considering this insect to be insignificant. He feared Allāh, repented to Him and placed his trust in Him.

When Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* used to think of his mistakes, he would fall unconscious and the trembling of his heart would be heard for one square mile. Allāh *taʿālā* sent Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* who went to him and said: "The almighty [Allāh] conveys peace to you and says: 'Have you seen a bosom friend fearing his bosom friend?' [Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām*] replied: 'O Jibraʾīl! When I think of my mistakes and I ponder over the consequences thereof, I forget about my friendship [with Allāh].'"

If these are the conditions and states of the Prophets, the friends of Allāh, the righteous people and those who have renounced this world, then take a lesson from them.

Abū al-Layth *raḥimahullāh* said: "Allāh has angels in the seven heavens who are in prostration since the time Allāh created them [and they will continue to be in prostration] until the day of Resurrection. Violent fear seizes them from merely thinking about acting

against the orders of Allāh *taʿālā*. They will raise their heads on the day of Resurrection and say: "Glory be to You! We did not worship You as we ought to have worshipped You." This is a manifestation of Allāh's words:

يَخَافُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُوْنَ مَا يُؤْمَرُوْنَ

They fear their Sustainer from above them and they carry out whatever they are ordered.[1]

In other words, they do not disobey Allāh *taʿālā* even for the blink of an eye. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

إذا اقشعر جسد العبد من خشية الله تعالى تحاتت عنه ذنوبه كما يتحاتّ عن الشجرة ورقها.

When the body of a person trembles out of the fear of Allāh taʿālā, sins fall off him just as leaves fall off a tree.[2]

In his book *Iṣlāḥ al-Qulūb* Ḥaḍrat ʿAmr Khālid explains eight qualities: (1) sincerity, (2) repentance, (3) reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*, (4) a servant's love for Allāh *taʿālā*, (5) Allāh's love for His servant, (6) striving against the carnal self, (7) the path to Paradise, (8) fear.

We will quote extracts on the last of these qualities, viz. fear of Allāh *taʿālā*.

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[1] Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 50.
[2] Al-Ghazzālī: *Mukāshafah al-Qulūb*.

The different levels of not having fear

Disobedience to parents

When we observed the disobedience to parents we learnt that the parents are crying, and they come to the reformers and mentors and complain about their children. A father is crying over his children. A highly respected person has cried on several occasions because of his children. The mother is crying and she is pained by what her daughter is doing. Whereas Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَقَضٰى رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْٓا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ط إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلٰهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ وَّلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيْمًا. وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِيْ صَغِيْرًا.

Your Sustainer has ordained that you do not worship but Him and that you show kindness to your parents. If one of them or both of them reach old age in your life, do not say to them: "Ugh!" nor scold them. Rather, speak to them with respect. Lower before them the wing of humility out of tenderness and say: "O my Sustainer! Show mercy to them as they reared me when I was small."[1]

Transgressions of the tongue

Now look at the transgressions of the tongue and see how many permissible and impressible things we utter. We will realize that we utter thousands of things. If a person returns home at night and evaluates whatever he said for the day by placing [in

[1] Sūrah Banī Isrāʾīl, 17: 23-24.

his mind] all the good things which he said on one side and the evils which he uttered on the other side, he will see how many bad things he said during the day. How many lies he must have spoken and how much of backbiting he must have engaged in either directly to someone, over the phone or through other means. In the same way, how much of tale-bearing he must have occupied himself in. There are many people who, when they meet their friends, greet them with abusive words. For example, "O you son of such and such person! How are you?" It is most unfortunate that our youngsters of today speak to their friends and associates in this way and consider it to be a friendly way of greeting.

You will also realize that there are many impermissible things, yet we speak about them by day and night. Whereas a Hadīth states that people will be flung upside down into the Hell-fire because of the transgressions of their tongues. Is there anyone who fears Allāh *taʿālā* with regard to his tongue? Is there anyone who thinks and ponders before he utters anything? We say inappropriate things. Our conversations are harām – we speak lies, backbite, carry tales, humiliate people, mock and jest at them, criticize them, speak of useless things, speak about shameful things, utter vulgarities, and so on. What is all this! Where are we? Where has our fear of Allāh *taʿālā* with regard to our tongues gone to?

Transgressions of the eyes

Look at where your eyes are moving to! There are many who commit another sin on account of a sin committed by the eyes. There are many who are grief-stricken because of the images which have taken

control of their hearts. Because those images are harām, the person cannot make them a reality.[1]

It is totally unlawful for any man or woman to look at the filthy websites on the internet or similar channels over the television. Just look at where our eyes are leading us to! Where is Allāh's fear in such a situation? Our eyes are free and unfettered – they trample on the honour of others with abandonment. Where is Allāh's fear with regard to our eyes?

I am not addressing you alone; rather I am addressing myself and want to stress to you that this topic of our discussion is extremely important. It is the topic of fear from which we are very far. We do things as though we have no fear whatsoever.

Dear brothers! Just look at our sisters how they walk around in public without bothering about covering themselves! In fact, they provide opportunities to the men to look at their physical features and attributes. Look at the women who are in purdah. A considerable amount of their hair is exposed, and their cloaks are tight-fitting. Are we observing the following instruction of Allāh *taʿālā* with regard to our gazes:

وَقُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوْجَهُنَّ

Say to the believing women to lower their gazes and to safeguard their private parts.[2]

Our youngsters have free reign over their eyes and they do not consider the following order of Allāh *taʿālā* in the least:

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[1] *Islāh al-Qulūb*, p. 286.
[2] Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 31.

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ

Say to the believers to lower their gazes.[1]

Note: It is extremely sad and unfortunate that we find Muslim traders displaying images of women in their businesses. These images are then looked at by all Muslim men and women; even the religious ones. No one seems to be overcome by shame to abstain from this and speak out against it! Did Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* not say: "Modesty is a part of īmān"? We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

Are our hearts really filled with Allāh's fear? Allāh *taʿālā* says:

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوْبُكُمْ مِنْ ۢ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ط وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهٰرُ ط وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَآءُ ط وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللهِ ط وَمَا اللهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ.

Then your hearts became hard thereafter, so they became like rocks or even harder. Of rocks are those from which rivers flow. Of them are those which split and water issues forth from them. And of them are those which fall down out of the fear of Allāh. Allāh is not unaware of your deeds.[2]

We hear this verse, we perceive Allāh's reprimand, but it does not create any fear in us. Allāh *taʿālā* is saying to us that rocks are better than us; they have

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[1] Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 30.
[2] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 74.

modesty while our hearts are covered with rust. Rocks fall out of Allāh's fear while our hearts are not restless for a single moment out of Allāh's fear. However, when we are afflicted by a tragedy or misery, our hearts tremble. These rocks are far better than our hearts which are not overcome by Allāh's fear for a single moment of our lives. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقٰسِيَةِ قُلُوْبِهِمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللهِ، اُولٰئِكَ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ

So destruction to those whose hearts are hard against the remembrance of Allāh. They are wandering in manifest error.[1]

لَوْ اَنْزَلْنَا هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ عَلٰى جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللهِ، وَتِلْكَ الْاَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ.

Had We revealed this Qur'ān upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled, rendered asunder by the fear of Allāh. Such are the parables We set forth for the people so that they may ponder.[2]

My dear brothers! Thousands of lectures and words of advice will not benefit for our rectification as long as our heart is not inclined towards Allāh's fear. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* clearly states:

اِنَّمَا تُنْذِرُ الَّذِيْنَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَيْبِ وَاَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ

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[1] Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 22.
[2] Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 21.

You [O Muḥammad] merely warn those who fear their Sustainer without seeing [Him] and establish the ṣalāh.[1]

The difference between khashyat and khauf

There is a difference between khauf for Allāh *taʿālā* and khashyat for Him. Khauf is a feeling which causes one to flee, to tremble and to be fearful. This is beneficial sometimes. Khashyat refers to a fear which is coupled with Allāh's love, respect for Him, and a feeling of awe towards Him. This explanation can be proven from the following verses.

وَاُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ غَيْرَ بَعِيْدٍ. هٰذَا مَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ لِكُلِّ اَوَّابٍ حَفِيْظٍ. مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمٰنَ بِالْغَيْبِ.

Paradise will be brought close to the righteous, not far off. This is what you had been promised – to every one who remained penitent, kept remembering [Allāh]. Who feared the Merciful without seeing [Him] and came with a penitent heart.[2]

What is the meaning of "Who feared the Merciful without seeing [Him]"? Ponder over it carefully. Allāh *taʿālā* could have said:

من خشي الجبار بالغيب، أو من خشي القهار بالغيب، أو من خشي القوي بالغيب.

The one fears the Omnipotent, or the one who fears the Subduer, or the one who fears the Powerful one.

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[1] Sūrah al-Fāṭir, 35: 18.
Iṣlāḥ al-Qulūb, p. 291.
[2] Sūrah Qāf, 50: 31-33.

Instead, He said: “Who feared the Merciful without seeing [Him]”. The word “Merciful” points to Allāh’s mercy. This shows that Allāh’s khashyat is attached to His love.

We went into some detail on this subject so that we may acquire that thing through which khashyat develops in our hearts. We see in the Qur’ānic and Prophetic style of expression that khashyat is always attached to the Resurrection. This is a natural thing. This is why our entire discussion for today will be about the Resurrection, after which, the development of khashyat is inevitable.

Think of every moment of the day of Resurrection

We have to think about every moment of the day of Resurrection so that we can acquire khashyat. When we ponder over things which created khashyat in the heart, we will find that the most effective thing in this regard is the day of Resurrection. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يٰأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمْ ج إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيْمٌ. يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّآ أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكٰرٰى وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكٰرٰى وَلٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللهِ شَدِيْدٌ.

O people! Fear your Sustainer, for surely, the earthquake of the [last] hour is a mighty thing. The day when you behold it, every suckling mother will forget her suckling, and every pregnant woman will deliver her burden, and you will see the people intoxicated yet they are not intoxicated, but the punishment of Allāh is severe.[1]

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[1] Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 1-2.

Will we not fear Allāh *taʿālā* even after listening to this verse? Are we going to continue sinning or are we going to repent?

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

هٰذَا يَوْمُ لَا يَنْطِقُوْنَ، وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُوْنَ

This is a day when they will not speak. Nor will they be permitted to offer excuses.[1]

You cannot offer any excuses now. The time for excuses has passed. You could have offered your excuses when you were in the world, and you could have repented then. Who in the world does not have the power to repent if he wants. As for the Hereafter, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

هٰذَا يَوْمُ لَا يَنْطِقُوْنَ، وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُوْنَ

This is a day when they will not speak. Nor will they be permitted to offer excuses.[2]

Ponder over the following words of Allāh *taʿālā*:

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا ص۪ وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوْٓءٍ ج تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا ۢ بَعِيْدًا ط وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهُ ط وَاللّٰهُ رَؤُوْفٌ ۢ بِالْعِبَادِ.

The day when every person shall find whatever good he has done presented before him, and whatever evil he has done. He will wish that there is, between it

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[1] Sūrah al-Mursalāt, 77: 35-36.
[2] Sūrah al-Mursalāt, 77: 35-36.

and himself, a vast distance. Allāh warns you of Himself, and Allāh is very kind to His servants.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يَوْمَ يَقُوْمُ الرُّوْحُ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ صَفًّا لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُوْنَ اِلَّا مَنْ اَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا.

The day when the soul and the angels shall stand in line. None will speak except he whom the Merciful permits, and declared what is right.[2]

Look at the fear of the angels who, by the command of Allāh *taʿālā*, do not disobey Him. If the angels will be made to stand in rows and they will not be able to speak, what will the condition of you people be?[3]

Scenes of the fury of Hell

Allāh *taʿālā* presents a scene when the Hell-fire will be seen from a distance:

إِذَا رَأَتْهُمْ مِّنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيْدٍ سَمِعُوْا لَهَا تَغَيُّظًا وَّزَفِيْرًا

When it will see them from a distant place, they will hear its raging and roaring.[4]

Do rage and fury have a sound? Yes, when there is intense anger then the sound of the anger of Hell will be heard. What a day that will be? Do you fear Allāh *taʿālā* in this world or not?

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[1] Sūrah Āl ʻImrān, 3: 30.
[2] Sūrah an-Naba', 78: 38-39.
[3] *Iṣlāḥ al-Qulūb*, p. 295.
[4] Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 12.

وَتَرَى الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ حَافِّيْنَ مِنْ حَوْلِ الْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُوْنَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ، وَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَقِيْلَ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ.

You see the angels circling round the throne, extolling the glory and praises of their Sustainer. Judgement is passed on them with justice. All that is said is: "All praise is due to Allāh, the Sustainer of the worlds."[1]

The mere presentation of Hell before the people will cause them to fall to their knees.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَتَرٰى كُلَّ اُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً، كُلُّ اُمَّةٍ تُدْعٰى اِلٰى كِتٰبِهَا، اَلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ

You will see every nation sitting on its knees. Each nation will be summoned to its record. Today you will be requited for all that you used to do.[2]

The Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* will be standing and everyone will be saying just one thing: O our Sustainer! Keep us safe. O our Sustainer! Keep us safe. What will you do on that day?

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِّنَّا الْحُسْنٰى ۙ أُولٰٓئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُوْنَ. لَا يَسْمَعُوْنَ حَسِيْسَهَا ۚ وَهُمْ فِيْ مَا اشْتَهَتْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ خٰلِدُوْنَ. لَا يَحْزُنُهُمُ الْفَزَعُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقّٰهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ۭ هٰذَا يَوْمُكُمُ الَّذِيْ كُنْتُمْ تُوْعَدُوْنَ.

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[1] Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 75.
[2] Sūrah al-Jāthiyah, 45: 28.

Those for whom goodness has been determined from Us since before – they shall remain far from it. They will not hear its slightest sound, but shall delight forever in what their souls desire. They shall not grieve in that great terror, and the angels shall receive them [saying]: This is your day which you were promised.[1]

Does this verse add to your khauf or your khashyat?

Then imagine the time when the accounting of deeds will commence. This will commence with the occurrence of a grand occurrence, viz. the arrival of Allāh *taʿālā*. Just picture the scene, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَجَآءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

Your Sustainer arrives, as well as the angels, in rank after rank.[2]

Imagine that the accounting of deeds has commenced, and an announced will be made: "Such and such person who is the son of such and such person present yourself before Allāh *taʿālā*." In his extreme fear and trepidation, the person's face will change colour, he will not move, and the angels will recognize him from his fear. The angels will recognize the most terrified person from among hundreds of thousands of people. They will then drag him and present him before Allāh *taʿālā*.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *taʿālā* will speak with each person. There will be no interpreter. The person will look to his right and see the deeds which he had done. He will look to his left

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[1] Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 101-103.
[2] Sūrah al-Fajr, 89: 22.

and see the deeds which he had done. He will look in front and he will see the Hell-fire. O people! Fear the Hell-fire even if it is on account of a piece of date."

Allāh's curse

Think of how you will be interrogated before Allāh *taʿālā*. He will speak to you. He will ask: Did I not favour you? Did I not give you beauty? Did I not give you parents and place love for you in their hearts? Yet you disobeyed them. Did I not give you strength, but you used it for My disobedience! O you! You gave no importance to this meeting with Me. Do you have no importance for Me in your heart? You disregarded the fact that I was watching you in the world.

Dear brothers! All these things will take place. Picture them and fear Allāh *taʿālā*.

Then think of how Allāh *taʿālā* will say to you: O My servant! If there was no servitude in your heart and your heart was unmindful of Me in the world, then read your book of deeds. You committed such and such actions on such and such day. If you were to read your sins before your father you will be ashamed. What will your condition be when your book of deeds will be in your hands? Imagine your condition at that time.

Also think of the time when Allāh *taʿālā* will say angrily: "O My servant! Get away from here. I am angry with you. I will neither forgive you nor accept anything from you. O angels! Seize him!" The angels will carry out the order immediately. Countless angels will rush towards him and say: Allāh has cursed this servant and is angry with him. How could he fight against his Lord by committing sins in the world?

Can anyone picture this scene? We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Allāh's mercy

If you are a believer, Allāh *taʿālā* will say: "O My servant! Come near." Allāh's effulgence will rain on you. He will say: "O My servant! Come close to Me." He will place a veil over you and ask: "Do you remember such and such sin?" He will continue asking until the servant will be convinced that there is no escape for him. Allāh *taʿālā* will say: "I had concealed your sins in the world. Today too I am pardoning you. O My servant! You may go. I will not disgrace you. I have pardoned you."

Just imagine your joy when Allāh *taʿālā* says: "Go, I have pardoned you. I will not disgrace you. I have forgiven you."

Picture the extent of your happiness when Allāh *taʿālā* says: "Go, I have pardoned you."

Do we still fear Allāh *taʿālā*? Is our khashyat one of love, yearning and reverting to Allāh *taʿālā*; or do we have the khauf which instils us with terror, anxiety and causes us to flee from Him. The latter is not what Allāh *taʿālā* wants from us. Whenever Allāh *taʿālā* spoke about fear, He coupled it with mercy. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتٰنِ

The one who fears standing before his Lord shall have two orchards.[1]

Have you now understood the meaning of khashyat?[1]

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[1] Sūrah ar-Raḥmān, 55: 46.

Stories of people who feared Allāh

1. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* feared Allāh *taʿālā* the most

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* relates: One night I realized that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was not at my bedside. I moved my hands around looking for him. I touched his feet. He was in prostration and saying: "O Allāh! I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your displeasure. I seek refuge in Your pardon from Your grasp. I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot praise you sufficiently. You are as You praised Yourself."

Listen! Do not commit sins; fear Allāh *taʿālā*. The closer you get to Allāh *taʿālā*, the more the sweetness of khauf and khashyat will increase. You will find that the one who fears Allāh *taʿālā* the most is the one who loves Him the most.

One day Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* buried one of his companions. He then cried profusely to the extent that the ground became moist. He then turned towards his Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* while his eyes were flowing with tears. He said: "My dear brothers! Prepare yourselves for situations like these." The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* relate: Whenever Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to get up from an assembly, he used to say the takbīr (Allāhu Akbar), raise his hands and make this duʿā':

اَللّٰهُمَّ اقْسِمْ لِيْ مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ مَا تَحُوْلُ بِهِ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ مَعْصِيَتِكَ

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[1] *Islāh al-Qulūb*, p. 310.

O Allāh! Confer on me such a level of fear for You which comes as a barrier between us and Your disobedience.

On one occasion the sun went into eclipse in Madīnah. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was overcome by anxiety, he rushed out, stood and performed salāh for a long period of time, then went into rukūʿ for a long time, and then into prostration for a long time. He then continued in duʿā' and said this repeatedly: "O my Lord! You did not promise me while I am begging for Your forgiveness. You did not promise me while I am present among them."

Allāh *taʿālā* says: "Allāh will not punish them while you are living among them. Allāh will not punish them while they are seeking forgiveness." Allāh *taʿālā* teaches khashyat to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as follows:

قُلْ إِنِّيْ أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّيْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ

Say: I fear, if I were to disobey my Sustainer, the punishment of a mighty day.[1]

Hadrat Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām*

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "On the night of Miʿrāj, I saw Jibraʾīl looking like a decayed sack cloth due to fear for Allāh *taʿālā*."

Hadrat Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* used to bring divine revelation. Allāh *taʿālā* had placed this trust in him.

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيْلُ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ. نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوْحُ الْأَمِيْنُ

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[1] Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 15.
Islāh al-Qulūb, p. 311.

This Qur'ān is a revelation from the Sustainer of the worlds. The reliable angel has brought it down.[1]

Hadrat Jibra'īl *ʿalayhis salām* never committed a sin, yet look at his fear.

3. Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*

On the day of the conquest of Bayt al-Maqdis [Jerusalem], Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was proceeding to receive the keys for Bayt al-Maqdis. People were awaiting his arrival. After entering, he said:

"Where is my brother Abū ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarrāh?" Abū ʿUbaydah came forward, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* embraced him and cried profusely. He then said: "O Abū ʿUbaydah! This is not a day of victory, it is a day of concern and worry. What will we say to our Lord when He asks us: 'What did you do after My Messenger?'"

Abū ʿUbaydah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Do not cry in the presence of these people." Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "O Abū ʿUbaydah! What answer will we give?" Abū ʿUbaydah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Come, let's cry in privacy, away from the people." He then proceeded towards a tree and began crying out of love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and fear of Allāh *taʿālā*.[2]

Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz

On the day of his demise, Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to his son: "O son! Place my cheek on the ground, perhaps ʿUmar's Lord will have mercy on

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[1] Sūrah ash-Shuʿarā', 26: 192-193.
[2] *Islāh al-Qulūb*, p. 312.

ʿUmar." He then said: "Destruction to me and destruction for my mother if my Lord does not show mercy to me. I hope I am left without any accounting."

When Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz used to read this verse from Sūrah al-Layl

فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظّٰى

And so, I have warned you of a raging fire.[1]

He could not read further. He used to cry and fall silent. He would restart the sūrah and cry when he reached the above verse.[2]

How to realize Allāh's khashyat

1. Abstain from sins. When the effects of sins are less on the heart, it will be filled with light. Reduce your sins. You might have to bear pain and hardships for this. As far as possible, abstain from sinning.

2. Think of the day of Resurrection, death, Paradise and Hell. Try to think about how you are going to present yourself before Allāh *taʿālā* on the day of Resurrection.

3. Be merciful towards people. This will create khashyat in your heart. The more mercy, kindness and compassion you show to people, the more your khashyat will increase.

These are the three points which I advise you to do if you have the intention of realizing khashyat within you.

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[1] Sūrah al-Layl, 92: 14.
[2] *Iṣlāḥ al-Qulūb*, p. 313.

1. Abstain from sinning as far as possible.
2. Think of Paradise and Hell.
3. Be kind and merciful towards people.

I feel I ought to draw your attention to another point. You must strive against your self until you begin fearing Allāh *taʿālā*. Once the process of khashyat commences in your heart, you will find no difficulty in fleeing from sins. In fact, your heart will feel joy, and you will experience enjoyment at fleeing from sins.

Īmān is obtained by making an effort on it. When you take admission in a college, you have knowledge of one or two things. When you graduate from there, you have knowledge of many things. This is because you learnt them there. The same can be said of īmān and Islam. You must therefore get up and strive for your rectification and training. Adopt methods on how to give up sins and to develop fear in your heart. Try to think of the day of Resurrection constantly and be kind and compassionate towards people. If you do this over a period of time, khashyat will come into your heart. Once you have khashyat, you will have the strength to combat sins. Not because it is a difficult thing to do, but because you will experience enjoyment in abstaining from sins. This has been experienced by many. You will then reach such a level of khashyat that when it has entered your heart completely, your heart will burn the opportunities of desires and reduce them to ashes.

You may have said that you can give up everything except sinning, and that you can never give it up. However, once you start striving against your carnal self and think of the day of Resurrection, and your heart starts fearing Allāh *taʿālā*, khashyat will enter

your heart and you will perceive the departure of sinning from your heart. You yourself will be surprised at how it left your heart! The fact of the matter is that Allāh *taʿālā* removed it from your heart. When khashyat entered your heart, it burnt the opportunities of sinning.

The first level of khashyat is that it puts an end to sinning. Look at how Hadrat Yūsuf *ʿalayhis salām* was faced with a situation in which most youngsters slip and fall. He was a handsome young man in a foreign land where no one knew him. His master's wife was trying to seduce him. She was the wife of a minister, and was herself a very attractive woman. She had locked the doors and no one could have seen them. She then offered herself to him, but Hadrat Yūsuf's heart was filled with Allāh's khashyat. This is why he said: "Maʿādhallāh" (I seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā).* Who is there who can say this with such force and sweetness!?

وَرَاوَدَتْهُ الَّتِيْ هُوَ فِيْ بَيْتِهَا عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ وَغَلَّقَتِ الْاَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ ؕ قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللّٰهِ اِنَّهٗ رَبِّيْ اَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ.

She, in whose house he was, tried to seduce him and she closed the doors. She then said: "Come quickly!" He replied: "I seek refuge in Allāh! The ʿAzīz, my master, has kept me well. Without doubt, the wrongdoers do not prosper.[1]

Once you start abstaining from sins and Allāh *taʿālā* sees khashyat in your heart, you will be conveyed to the next level of Allāh's khashyat. You will cry out of Allāh's fear and you will experience the joy of crying

[1] Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 23.

in this way. This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that the person who cried out of Allāh's fear will not enter the Hell-fire until milk returns to the udders.[1]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that there are two drops and two marks which are most beloved to Allāh *taʿālā*. A drop of tear which is shed out of Allāh's fear and a drop of blood which is shed in Allāh's cause. As for the two marks, one is the mark which is left on account of an injury sustained while fighting in Allāh's cause. The other is a mark which is left by carrying out one of the obligations of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that if a person engages in Allāh's remembrance and begins crying out of His fear to the extent that his tears fall to the ground, then such a person will not be punished on the day of Resurrection.

When Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to read the following verse, he used to fall into prostration. He would then say: "We have prostrated, but we have not shed tears."

وَيَخِرُّوْنَ لِلْاَذْقَانِ يَبْكُوْنَ وَيَزِيْدُهُمْ خُشُوْعًا

They fall on their chins, weeping, and it increases them in humility.[2]

You will then reach the lofty levels of khashyat. It entails fearing Allāh *taʿālā* in your affairs and dealings with people. Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* used to say to his attendant: "When

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[1] Narrated by Tirmidhī.
[2] Sūrah Banī Isrāʾīl, 17: 109.

you see me wronging anyone or trampling the rights of anyone, you must take hold of my garment, tug me and say: 'O 'Umar! Do you not fear Allāh?'"

I do not want you to only cry when you fear Allāh *taʿālā*. Rather, when you fear Allāh *taʿālā* you must fear Him as regards your dealings with your wives, children, your subordinates, attendants and all those with whom you are in contact.

If we comply with the previously-listed three points, we can conclude that we have realized khashyat in the true sense of the word.[1]

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to follow the causes of His khashyat and to practise accordingly. Āmīn. (compiler)

Khashyat is one of the signs of the 'ulamā' of the Hereafter

وقيل خمسة من الأخلاق هي من علامات علماء الآخرة مفهومة من خمس آيات من كتاب الله عز وجل: الخشية، الخشوع، التواضع، حسن الخلق، وإيثار الآخرة وهو الزهد. فأما الخشية فمن قوله تعالى: إنما يخشى الله من عباده العلماء. وأما الخشوع فمن قوله تعالى: خشعين لل، لا يشترون بايت الله ثمنا قليلا. وأما التواضع فمن قوله تعالى: واخفض جناحك للمؤمنين. وأما حسن الخلق فمن قوله تعالى:

[1] *Iṣlāḥ al-Qulūb*, p. 318.

فبما رحمة من الله لنت لهم. وأما الزهد فمن قوله تعالى: وقال الذين اوتوا العلم ويلكم ثواب الله خير لمن امن وعمل صالحا.[1]

A scholar said: There are five qualities which are from among the signs of the ʿulamā' of the Hereafter. These can be gauged from the verses of the Qur'ān. They are: fear of Allāh *taʿālā*, submission, humbleness, a friendly attitude, disinterest in the world. This last quality is of fundamental importance.

Fear of Allāh can be understood from the following verse:

اِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللّٰهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

From His servants, it is the ʿulamā' who fear Allāh.

Submission can be understood from this verse:

خٰشِعِيْنَ لِلّٰهِ لَا يَشْتَرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا

Submitting themselves before Allāh. They do not sell Allāh's verses for a trivial price.

Humbleness is learnt from the following verse:

وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

Lower your wing of humility for the believers.

Friendly and good character is mentioned in this verse:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ

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[1] إحياء علوم الدين، ج ١، ص ٨٢.

It is solely out of Allāh's mercy that you are kind and soft-hearted towards them.

Abstention from the world is conveyed as follows:

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ اٰمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا

Those who were endowed with knowledge said: Woe to you! The reward of Allāh is much better for the one who believes and does good deeds.

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* embellish us with these qualities which are mentioned in the Qur'ān by His grace. Āmīn. (compiler)

Taqwā

يٰأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ حَقَّ تُقٰتِهٖ وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ إِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ

O believers! Continuously fear Allāh as He ought to be feared and do not die except as Muslims.[1]

Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ Sāhib ʿUthmānī *rahimahullāh* writes in his commentary to the above verse:

The word "taqwā" in its original Arabic sense means "to keep away from" or "to abstain". It is also translated as "to fear" because the things which we are ordered to keep away from are either things to be feared or they could result in Allāh's punishment.

There are several levels of taqwā, the lowest of which is to abstain from unbelief and polytheism. In this sense, every Muslim can be referred to as a muttaqī even if he may be committing sins. The words

[1] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 102.

muttaqīn and taqwā are used in many places in the Qur'ān to convey this meaning.

The next level is to abstain from the things which are disliked by Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The virtues and blessings of taqwā as mentioned in the Qur'ān and Hadīth are promised on this level.

The third level of taqwā is that lofty position which is enjoyed by the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* and their special heirs, the Auliyā' of Allāh *taʿālā*. It entails saving one's heart from all apart from Allāh *taʿālā* and inhabiting it with Allāh's remembrance and His pleasure.

In the verse under discussion, the words "as He ought to be feared" have been added after the words "Continuously fear Allāh".

What is the meaning of fearing Allāh *taʿālā* as He ought to be feared? It is explained by Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd, Rabīʿ, Qatādah and Hasan al-Basrī *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* through a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as follows:

حق تقاته – هو أن يطاع فلا يعصى، ويذكر فلا ينسى، ويشكر فلا يكفر

As He ought to be feared means that He must be obeyed without being disobeyed, remembered without being forgotten, thanked without being unappreciated.

Similar meanings have been given by the imāms of tafsīr. For example, fearing Allāh *taʿālā* as He ought to be feared means that the criticism of any critic must be disregarded in matters related to Allāh *taʿālā*. The person must remain firm on justice even

if it causes harm to one's self, children or parents. Others say that a person cannot fear Allāh *taʿālā* as He ought to be feared until and unless he safeguards his tongue.

Another verse of the Qur'ān states:

اِتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ

Fear Allāh as much as you can.

Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat Tā'ūs *rahimahullāh* say that this verse is actually an explanation of fearing Allāh *taʿālā* as He ought to be feared. It means that a person must spend all his resources and powers to abstain from sins. If he does this, he will be fulfilling the order of fearing Allāh *taʿālā* as He ought to be feared. If a person falls into sin even after spending all his means to abstain from sin, it will not be against the order of fearing Allāh *taʿālā* as He ought to be feared.

The next part of the verse states:

وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ إِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ

Do not die except as Muslims.

We learn from this that taqwā is actually Islam in its entirety. That is, total obedience to Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and complete abstention from their disobedience is taqwā, and this is known as Islam.[1]

[1] Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 127.

Justice is established through taqwā

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِعْدِلُوْا قف هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ز وَاتَّقُوا اللهَ ط إِنَّ اللهَ خَبِيْرٌ ۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ

Establish justice. This is closest to piety. And continually fear Allāh. Allāh is fully aware of what you do.[1]

The system of this world revolves around justice, equity and true testimony. These are the elements which set a seal on the doors of all wrongs and oppressions. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* says: O believers! Your īmān demands that you stand up for the truth and remain firm on it. You should therefore be forever ready to fulfil Allāh's rights. And when it is the time to fulfil the rights of fellow humans, you must be testifiers to the truth with justice irrespective of whether it is against a friend or a foe. Let not your enmity towards a people prompt you to discard justice. Establish justice with friend and foe. This attitude is closest to taqwā and piety. Piety demands that all – friends and foes – be treated equally without partiality and without trampling the rights of anyone. Continually fear disobedience to Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh *taʿālā* is most certainly aware of your actions. Your justice or lack of it is not hidden from Him.[2]

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[1] Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 8.

[2] Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 304.

People of taqwā will be saved from Hell

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَإِنْ مِّنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا، كَانَ عَلٰى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا. ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ فِيْهَا جِثِيًّا.

There isn't anyone among you who will not pass through it. This is a promise upon your Sustainer – inevitable, absolute. We shall then save those who continued fearing [Us] and leave the sinners in it, fallen on their knees.[1]

The above verses state that there will be no human who will not pass over Hell. Everyone will pass through, but the pious ones will be rescued while the wrongdoers will fall into it on their knees and remain therein.

What is the meaning of passing through or passing over? The well-known explanation is that all believers, unbelievers, righteous people and sinners will pass over the bridge which extends over the Hell-fire. The believers who feared Allāh *taʿālā* will cross over safely according to the level of their piety. The evil doers will not be able to cross over. There will be large hooks which will hook them and cast them into the Hell-fire. Many Muslims who committed wrongs will also be hooked and cast into it. After some time – through the intercession of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*, the angels and righteous people; or through the direct mercy of Allāh *taʿālā* – they who had read the kalimah with sincerity will be removed. Only the unbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites will remain.

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[1] Sūrah Maryam, 19: 71-72.

Other scholars are of the view that everyone will have to go into Hell, but it will turn into a cool breeze for the believers. It will be similar to the fire in which Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* was cast and became cool for him by the order of Allāh *taʿālā*. This explanation has been given by Hadrat Jābir ibn ʿAbdillāh *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Crossing over the bridge cannot be rejected because it is established from authentic Ahādīth. These are to be found in *Sahīh Bukhārī*, *Sahīh Muslim* and other Hadīth collections. While accepting the explanation of Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* we could say that the believers who cross the bridge safely will then be entered into Hell which will be turned into a cool breeze for them. They will then leave it safely and be admitted into Paradise. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best.[1]

Taqwā is in the heart

قول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "التقوى ههنا" – معناه على ما فسره النووي أن الأعمال الظاهرة لا تحصل بها التقوى، وإنما تحصل بما يقع في القلب من عظمة الله تعالى وخشيته ومراقبته. وقال القرطبي: التقوى مصدر اتقى، والمتقي هو الذي يجعل بينه وبين ما يخافه وقاية تقيه منه. والمتقي شرعا هو الذي يجعل بينه وبين عذاب الله تعالى وقاية من الطاعة فإذًا أصل التقوى الخوف، والخوف ينشأ عن المعرفة بجلال الله تعالى وعظيم سطوته وعقابه والخوف والمعرفة محله الصدر، فلذلك أشار إلى صدره.

[1] *Anwār al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 294.

وليس مراده كما زعم بعض جهلة المتصوفة وبعض المتجديدين أن المقصود هو غرس التقوى وخشية الله تعالى في القلب، فمتى حصل ذلك استغنى المرء عن الأعمال الظاهرة، لأنه لو كان ذلك لما احتاج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو أتقى المتقين أن يباشر الأعمال الظاهرة من الصلاة والصوم والجهاد وغيره، وإنما المقصود أن الأعمال الظاهرة لا تقبل عند الله تعالى إلا إذا كانت صادرة عن الإخلاص وحسن النية وتقوى الله سبحانه، فيجب الإهتمام بالإخلاص كما يجب تعاطي الأعمال الظاهرة.[1]

In one lengthy Ḥadīth, Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam pointed towards his heart and said: "Taqwā is here." ʿAllāmah Nawawī raḥimahullāh explains this and says that taqwā is not acquired by only outward actions. Rather, through His fear and meditating over His greatness.

ʿAllāmah Qurṭubī raḥimahullāh said that a muttaqī is a person who places a barrier between himself and the thing which he fears so that he is saved from it. In the Sharīʿat a muttaqī is one whose acts of obedience come as barriers between himself and Allāh's punishment. Thus, taqwā is essentially fear which is developed through Allāh's recognition, and being conscious of His power, punishment and greatness. Since fear and recognition are in the heart, Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam pointed to it.

It is not what certain ignorant Sufis and modernists claim when they say that taqwā and fear must be

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[1] تكملة فتح الملهم، ج ٥، ص ١٨٤.

developed in the heart only, and once a person acquires them, he is absolved of outward actions. If this was the case, there would have been no need for Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam to perform salāh, keep fast, perform hajj, go for jihād and carry out other external actions. This, notwithstanding the fact that he was the imām of all muttaqī people. What this means is that the external actions are not acceptable in the sight of Allāh taʿālā when they are devoid of sincerity and taqwā. Thus, giving due attention to sincerity is just as essential as the external actions.

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā*, through His grace, endow us with the quality of taqwā. Āmīn. (compiler)

Allāh prohibits us from making claims to taqwā

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ

So do not boast about your purity.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* knows you better. He knows your conditions better than what you know of them. He created you from soil, your beginning is from soil. Remember the time when you were in the wombs of your mothers. You were transferred from the loins of your fathers, and brought into the wombs of your mothers where you were given shape and form.

Allāh *taʿālā* says: He knows you better because He created you, and He destined wretchedness and goodness for you before you even came into existence. You will be constantly changing according to whatever He wrote for you as regards your

[1] Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 32.

sustenance, death, actions and conditions. Actions which are in agreement with the Sharīʿat cannot necessarily bring goodness, and those which are in conflict with the Sharīʿat cannot necessarily bring wretchedness. You will die according to how you were destined to die from before hand.

You should therefore not display yourself as a pure person. You must not praise yourself out of pride and haughtiness over the purity of your actions and goodness of conditions. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best who is pious. Thus, taqwā is concealed from everyone except Allāh *taʿālā*. This was demonstrated by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* when he pointed towards his heart and said: "Taqwā is here."

Abū ʿUthmān said that the person who knows from where he was created, to what point he knows, and in what condition he is at present – we can say with regard to him that he is not displaying himself as a pure person. Despite this, he is the addressee of this verse.

فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ

So do not boast about your purity.[1]

On what basis can he claim purity? Can he base it on his character, conditions, actions or words whereas his carnal self which prompts him towards evil is attached to him!?

If a person claims purity it is an indication that he considers himself hidden from Allāh *taʿālā*. This is because the person who has no hope of his continued existence, who is fully conscious of Allāh's

[1] Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 32.

presence, and immersed in the thought of meeting Him can never consider himself to be pure. After all, he knows that he is to come to an end. We are taught that it is essential for a Muslim to consider a fellow Muslim to be better than himself. If he sees an old man, he says: He has more acts of obedience than me, he is therefore superior to me. If he sees a young person, he says: He has committed fewer sins than me, so he is better than me. As for the one who thinks that everyone is worse than him, he is a proud and haughty person. What this means is that we do not know what is going to happen. This is why we should constantly beg Allāh *taʿālā* for wellbeing.[1]

Note: Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh* said: "It is easy for every person to choose to be humble because if he sees someone elder than him, he thinks to himself that he has done more good. If he sees someone younger than him, he thinks to himself that he has committed fewer sins." Glory to Allāh! What an easy prescription for the acquisition of humility. (compiler)

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَّعْمَلُ عَلٰى شَاكِلَتِهٖ ؕ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدٰى سَبِيْلاً

Say: Each one acts in a manner peculiar to himself. So your Sustainer knows best the one who is most guided.[2]

The believers, unbelievers, righteous ones and mischief makers – each one is acting in his own way. In other words, each one is acting according to his intellect – based on his knowledge or ignorance. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best who is on the correct path. In the

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[1] From the tafsīr of Mullā ʿAlī Qārī, vol. 5, p. 55.
[2] Sūrah Banī Isrāʾīl, 17: 84.

same way, He knows the one who is not on the right path. He will reward or punish each one according to his actions. It cannot happen that a person considers himself to be on the right path without any proof and evidence.[1]

People of taqwā acquire Allāh's togetherness

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ اللهَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا وَّالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ مُّحْسِنُوْنَ

Surely Allāh is with those who are righteous and those who do virtuous deeds.[2]

Now that Allāh *taʿālā* conferred you [Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] and your Companions with the attributes of taqwā and ihsān, you can conclude that Allāh's help is with you and that the plots of the unbelievers will not be successful against you. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, history demonstrated that the unbelievers continued plotting while Islam continued progressing.[3]

Maulānā Abū Tāhir Muhammad Is-hāq Sāhib writes in his book *Tuhfah ʿIlm Wa Hikmat* on the subject of taqwā. He comments on the following Hadīth:

اتق الله حيثما كنت، واتبع السيئة الحسنة تمحها، وخالق الناس بخلق حسن.

Fear Allāh wherever you are. Follow an evil deed with a good one; the latter will wipe out the effects of the

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[1] Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 5, p. 523.
[2] Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 128.
[3] *Anwār al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 294.

former. Interact with people with good and sound character.

The word taqwā is derived from *wiqāyah* which means "a shield" or "form of protection". Taqwā would therefore mean to choose that shield or form of protection through which man can save himself from the prohibited and unlawful. Taqwā with relation to Allāh *taʿālā* will mean protecting one's self against all those things which could cause His anger and wrath, and which He is displeased with.

This is why *taqwallāh* is explained as "carrying out His orders and abstaining from His prohibitions". When man saves himself from Allāh's disobedience and His wrath and anger, he will obviously save himself from the Hell-fire, and he would have realized the objective of taqwā.

This can only happen when the fear of Allāh *taʿālā* is firmly embedded in a person's heart. He has full conviction that Allāh *taʿālā* is watching him and that He can punish him for his disobedience. This is why the 'ulamā' say that when the word taqwā is attributed to Allāh *taʿālā*, it will mean fear. After all, the thing which ought to be feared the most is Allāh's displeasure. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ اِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ

Continue fearing Allāh before whom you are to be assembled.

When you are assembled before Him, you will be recompensed for your actions. This is bound to happen whether you like it or not.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

هُوَ اَهْلُ التَّقْوٰى وَاَهْلُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ

He alone should be feared, and He alone is worthy of forgiving.[1]

Thus, the previously quoted Hadīth will mean: You must continually fear Allāh *taʿālā* no matter where you are.

The first order in this Hadīth is that of taqwā because it is the source and foundation of all actions and devotions. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ اتَّقُوا اللهَ

We commanded the previous people of the Book and you to continually fear Allāh.[2]

We explained previously that one of the meanings of taqwā is to carry out Allāh's orders and to abstain from His prohibitions.

Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* is reported to have said that taqwā does not only mean you must perform salāh by night and keep fast by the day, and nothing else. Rather, it entails abstaining from all the prohibitions of Allāh *taʿālā*, and carrying out all His obligations. After that, whatever good he does, it will be additional light and goodness for him.

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said that taqwā means that man fears Allāh *taʿālā* with regard to even the slightest speck and abstains from even those lawful things regarding which he has some doubt. He must never allow such doubtful things to

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[1] Sūrah al-Muddaththir, 74: 56.
[2] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 131.

come as a veil between himself and what is unlawful. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

Sidq

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ ط لِلَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَّرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللهِ ط وَاللهُ بَصِيْرٌ ۢ بِالْعِبَادِ. اَلَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَآ اٰمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْلَنَا ذُنُوْبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ. اَلصّٰبِرِيْنَ وَالصّٰدِقِيْنَ وَالْقٰنِتِيْنَ وَالْمُنْفِقِيْنَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِيْنَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ.

Say: Shall I inform you of something better than that? For the pious there are, with their Sustainer, gardens beneath which rivers flow - abiding therein forever, pure wives and the pleasure of Allāh. And in Allāh's sight are the servants. Those who say: "O our Sustainer! We have believed, so forgive us our sins and save us from the punishment of the fire." Those who exercise patience, are truthful, carry out orders, spend and seek forgiveness for sins in the latter part of the night.[2]

From the people of taqwā, the second group of people are the sādiqīn. They are the ones who choose truthfulness in every matter. They observe truthfulness in their words, actions, dealings and promises. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

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[1] Maulānā Abū Tāhir Muhammad Is-hāq: *Tuhfah ʿIlm Wa Hikmat*, p. 343.
[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 15-17.

لا يزال المؤمن يتحرى الصدق حتى يكتب عند الله صديقا

A believer continues seeking truthfulness to the extent that he is recorded as a siddīq by Allāh taʿālā.

In Sūrah at-Taubah, Allāh *taʿālā* says: "O believers! Fear Allāh and:

وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصَّادِقِيْنَ

Remain with the truthful ones.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says in Sūrah al-Mā'idah:

هٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ صِدْقُهُمْ

This is the day in which their truthfulness will benefit the truthful ones.

Allāh *taʿālā* says in Sūrah al-Ahzāb:

لِيَسْئَلَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ عَنْ صِدْقِهِمْ

The truthful ones will be asked about their truthfulness on the day of Resurrection.

Allāh *taʿālā* says in the beginning of Sūrah al-ʿAnkabūt:

فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا

Allāh shall certainly know those who are truthful.

All the above verses show that truthfulness is a great deed in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā* and He has immense rewards in store for those who have this quality.[2]

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah.
[2] *Maʿālim al-ʿIrfān*, vol. 4, p. 69.

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: من سأل الله تعالى الشهادة بصدق بلغه الله منازل الشهداء وإن مات على فراشه.[1]

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Whoever asks Allāh taʿālā for martyrdom with genuine truthfulness, Allāh taʿālā will convey him to the ranks of the martyrs even if he dies on his bed.

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن الصدق يهدي إلى البر، وإن البر يهدي إلى الجنة، وإن الرجل ليصدق حتى يكتب عند الله صديقا.[2]

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Truthfulness steers a person towards piety, and piety steers him towards Paradise. A person continues speaking the truth until he is recorded as a truthful person by Allāh taʿālā.

قال العلامة ابن أبي شريف في حواشي شرح العقائد: الصدق استعمله الصوفية بمعنى استواء السر والعلانية والظاهر والباطن بأن لا تكذب أحوال العبد أعماله ولا أعماله أحواله، وجعلوا الإخلاص لازما أعم. فقالوا كل صادق مخلص وليس كل مخلص صادقا.

وفي شرح رسالة القشيرية للشيخ زكريا سئل الشيخ الجنيد أهما واحد أم بينهما فرق؟ فقال بينهما فرق. الصدق أصل والإخلاص فرع،

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[1] رواه مسلم، رقم ١٩٠٦.

[2] بخاري: ٦٠٩٤، ومسلم: ٢٦٠٧.

والصدق أصل كل شيء والإخلاص لا يكون إلا بعد الدخول في الأعمال، والأعمال لا تكون مقبولة إلا بهما.[1]

ʿAllāmah Ibn Abī Sharīf writes in the marginal notes of Sharḥ al-ʿAqā'id that the Sufis use the word ṣidq when a person's private and public life and his internal and external selves are the same. In other words, his conditions do not contradict his actions, nor do his actions contradict his conditions. (That is, there is conformity between his words, actions and conditions. This is ṣidq). They say that ikhlāṣ (sincerity) is essential for this, and it is in the general sense. Thus, every truthful person will be sincere, but every sincere person is not necessarily truthful.

Shaykh Junayd raḥimahullāh was asked if ṣidq and ikhlāṣ are one and the same thing or if there is a difference between the two? He replied: There is a difference between the two. Ṣidq is the fundamental while ikhlāṣ is its branch. Ṣidq is the fundamental of everything while ikhlāṣ comes into play after starting actions. Yes, actions are only acceptable when both [ṣidq and ikhlāṣ] are present.

The author of *Risālah Qushayrīyyah* said:

أول قدم للمريد في هذه الطريقة ينبغي أن يكون على الصدق.

The first step of a murīd in this path has to be on the basis of ṣidq.

Ḥadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* used to quote the following couplet quite often:

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[1] دليل الفالحين، ص ٢٨٢.

O Farīd! Remain truthful in your will so that you can obtain the keys to Allāh-recognition.

Ikhlāṣ

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَآ اُمِرُوا اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللهَ مُخْلِصِيْنَ لَهُ الدِّيْنَ، حُنَفَاءَ

They were solely ordered to worship Allāh, devotedly worshipping Him [alone] – turning away (from all false creeds).[1]

This verse proves the need for ikhlāṣ (sincerity and devotion) and perfecting the levels of ikhlāṣ which is conveyed by the word *ḥunafā'*.[2]

The importance and immensity of ikhlāṣ is gauged from here. The basis for all actions is this very ikhlāṣ. If an action contains ikhlāṣ, the person will be rewarded for it; or else, he will not.

Ḥaḍrat ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Mubārak *raḥimahullāh* said:

رب عمل صغير تعظمه النية، ورب عمل كبير تصغره النية.

Many an action is insignificant in itself but becomes great on account of a true intention. Many a big action is labelled small because of an absence of a true intention.

The most important and fundamental point is to correct one's intention before carrying out an action. When the intention is purely for Allāh *taʿālā*, the person will be eligible for reward. If it is not purely for

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[1] Sūrah al-Bayyinah, 98: 5.
[2] *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 770.

Allāh *taʿālā*, then he will not be rewarded for even the biggest and greatest of actions.

The virtue of ikhlās

والإنسان منهمك في حظوظه منغمس في شهواته، قلما ينفك فعل من أفعاله وعبادة من عباداته عن حظوظ ما وأغراض عاجله، ولذلك من سلم له في عمره خطرة واحدة خالصة لوجه الله نجا. وذلك لعز الإخلاص وعسر تنقية القلب عن هذه الشوائب، بل الخالص هو الذي لا باعث فيه إلا طلب القرب من الله تعالى.[1]

Man is engrossed in acquiring enjoyments and immersed in his carnal desires. Rarely would he leave any of his actions and devotions on account of those enjoyments which will enable him to realize his objective quickly. This is why if a person has just a single moment of his entire life which was solely for Allāh taʿālā he will achieve salvation. This is due to the greatness of ikhlās and the difficulty in cleansing the heart of these evils. In fact, the truly pure action is the one which stems from nothing but the quest for Allāh's proximity.

Note: Glory to Allāh! This is a most excellent discussion which demonstrates the great virtue and importance of ikhlās. May Allāh *taʿālā* – through His grace – confer us with ikhlās even if it is for a single moment so that we can be blessed with success in this world and the Hereafter. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

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[1] الموافقات، ج ٢، ص ٢١٤.

Definition of ikhlāṣ

الإخلاص هو أن يتمثل في عقله نفع العبادة لله تعالى من جهة قرب نفسه من الحق كما قال تبارك وتعالى: "إن رحمة الله قريب من المحسنين". أو من جهة تصديق ما وعد الله تعالى على السنة رسله من ثواب الآخرة فينشأ منه الأعمال بداعية عظيمة لا يشوبها رياء ولا سمعة ولا موافقة عاده ويصحب هذا الحال على جميع أعماله حتى الأعمال المباحة العادية، قال الله تعالى: "ومآ أمروا إلا ليعبدوا الله مخلصين له الدين". وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم: إنما الأعمال بالنيات.[1]

Ikhlāṣ means that the benefit of worship for Allāh taʿālā be present in a person's mind. This benefit could be that because of it, the proximity to Allāh taʿālā which he acquires comes before him. As Allāh taʿālā Himself said: "Surely Allāh's mercy is near the doers of good." Alternatively, it could be because the person fully affirms the reward which Allāh taʿālā promised in the Hereafter via His Messengers. Consequently, the person carries out actions with intense devotion which is not tainted by ostentation, causing people to hear about it, nor in fulfilment of a custom. This condition then accompanies all his actions, even those which are merely permissible and habitual. Allāh taʿālā says: They were solely ordered to worship Allāh, devotedly worshipping Him [alone]. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: All actions are dependent on intentions.

The [Urdu] translator says: The final objective of taṣawwuf whose name in the Sharīʿat is iḥsān and

[1] حجة الله البالغة، ج ٢، ص ٦٩.

ʿilm al-ikhlāṣ is the realization of this station whose need and importance is proven from the Qur'ān and Sunnat.

Tawāḍuʿ

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

Lower your wing [of humility] for the believers who follow you.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *raḥimahullāh* writes in his commentary to this verse:

The spiritual mentors are taught to be soft and humble towards their sincere followers so that it brings joy to them.[2]

The linguistic meaning of tawāḍuʿ is to be humble, to display softness and humbleness, to be of selfless temperament. Tawāḍuʿ is the best of all the characteristics of the Sufis. There is no better garment for a servant than tawāḍuʿ. When a person acquires the treasure of tawāḍuʿ, he establishes himself before everyone according to a certain standard. At the same time, he accords to every other person the rank and status which is suited to him. The person who acquires tawāḍuʿ lives with comfort and conveys the same to others.

وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا اِلَّا الْعَالِمُوْنَ

It is only the intelligent ones who will be able to understand this point thoroughly.

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[1] Sūrah ash-Shuʿarā', 26: 215.
[2] *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8, p. 76.

Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation to me asking me to be humble, and that no person should wrong another.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قُلْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ

Say: If you love Allāh, then follow me.

In his explanation to the above verse, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: The following (which has been ordered in this verse) must be with piety, fear and humility. The extent of Rasūlullāh's humility was that he used to accept the invitation of everyone, free people and slaves. He used to accept the gifts of everyone even if it was a sip of milk or the thigh-piece of a rabbit. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* would reciprocate the gifts which were given to him, and also use those that were given to him. He would never feel too proud to reply to a slave woman or slave. Instead, he used to reply humbly to them.

The lofty quality of tawāduʿ

Sulaymān ibn ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: A minor form of humility is that you offer salām to whomever you meet, and reply to the salām of whoever offers it to you. Furthermore, you must not consider it below you to sit in a disregarded spot in an assembly. You must not have the desire for anyone to praise you or to do you a favour.

Someone asked Shaykh Junayd *rahimahullāh*: "What is tawāduʿ?" He replied: "It means that you must lower your sides and soften yourself."

When Hadrat Fudayl *rahimahullāh* was asked about tawāduʿ he said: "It entails submitting before the truth and speaking the truth." He also said: "A person who thinks highly of himself has no share of tawāduʿ."[1]

Khushūʿ

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ

Successful indeed are the believers. Who are humble in their salāh.[2]

The literal meaning of khushūʿ is stillness or calmness. In the definition of the Sharīʿat it means there must be calmness in the heart as well. In other words, thoughts of anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā* should not be wittingly brought into the heart. The parts of the body must also be still in the sense that the person must not engage in futile movements.[3]

This especially applies to movements in salāh which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* prohibited and which the jurists listed as the makrūh acts of salāh. *Tafsīr Mazharī* contains the above definition of khushūʿ on the authority of Hadrat ʿAmr ibn Dīnār. The definitions given by other scholars are essentially details of the stillness of the heart and body parts mentioned above. For example, Hadrat Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* said that khushūʿ entails lowering one's gaze and the tone of one's voice. Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said that khushūʿ refers to looking

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[1] *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif*, p. 176.
[2] Sūrah al-Muʾminūn, 23: 1-2.
[3] *Bayān al-Qurʾān*.

to the right and left with the corners of one's eyes. Hadrat ʿAṭā' *raḥimahullāh* said that it refers to abstaining from playing with any part of one's body.

Hadrat Abū Dharr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that when a person commences ṣalāh, Allāh *taʿālā* focuses on him for as long as he does not shift his attention. When he shifts his attention by looking with the corners of his eyes, Allāh *taʿālā* turns His attention away from him.[1]

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* instructed Hadrat Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to focus his gaze on the spot of prostration and to abstain from looking to his right and left.

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* saw a person playing with his beard while in ṣalāh, so he said:

لو خشع قلب هذا لخشعت جوارحه

Had there been khushūʿ in his heart, his body parts would have remained still.

The status of khushūʿ in ṣalāh

Imām Ghazzālī *raḥimahullāh*, Imām Qurṭubī *raḥimahullāh* and a few other scholars said that khushūʿ in ṣalāh is compulsory. If the entire ṣalāh is performed without khushūʿ it will not be considered to be fulfilled. Other scholars say that khushūʿ is undoubtedly the soul of ṣalāh without which the ṣalāh is lifeless. Nonetheless, we cannot say that it is a pillar of ṣalāh in the sense that in the absence of

[1] Narrated by Aḥmad, Nasa'ī, Abū Dāwūd and others.

khushūʿ the salāh will be invalid and will have to be repeated.

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* states in *Bayān al-Qur'ān* that although khushūʿ is not a prerequisite for the validity of salāh and is not on the level of being compulsory, it is a prerequisite for the acceptance of salāh and is compulsory in this regard.

Tabarānī *raḥimahullāh* relates in *al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr* on the authority of Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: The first thing to be taken away from the ummat will be khushūʿ to the extent that not a single person from a group will have this quality.[1]

Īthār

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَالَّذِيْنَ تَبَوَّءُو الدَّارَ وَالْاِيْمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّوْنَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُوْنَ فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوْتُوْا وَيُؤْثِرُوْنَ عَلٰى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ، وَمَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَاُوْلٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ.

Those who are abiding in this abode and in faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and they do not experience any constriction in their hearts for what the emigrants are given. They give preference to them over their own selves even though they may be experiencing poverty. He who has been saved from the greed of his self, it is such who have achieved their goal.[2]

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[1] *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 296.
[2] Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 9.

Īthār means to give preference to the needs of your fellow Muslim over your own needs. This is why we see the Ahlullāh giving preference to the needs and necessities of other Muslims over their own needs and necessities.

Even if they obtain food when they are extremely hungry, they prefer remaining hungry and give over the food to other needy people.

Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

وَالَّذِيْنَ تَبَوَّءُو الدَّارَ وَالْاِيْمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّوْنَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُوْنَ فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوْتُوْا وَيُؤْثِرُوْنَ عَلٰى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ، وَمَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَاُوْلٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ.

Those who are abiding in this abode and in faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and they do not experience any constriction in their hearts for what the emigrants are given. They give preference to them over their own selves even though they may be experiencing poverty. He who has been saved from the greed of his self, it is such who have achieved their goal.[1]

The righteous ones give preference to the needs of others over their own selves even if they themselves are hungry and in need.

The Ahlullāh enjoy a lofty and distinguished position by virtue of their noble character and matchless quality of giving preference to others.

May Allāh *taʿālā* enable the Muslims of today to follow in the footsteps of their pious predecessors

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[1] Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 9.

while conferring them with their [pious predecessors'] love, devotion and pain. Āmīn.

أخرج أبو الشيخ في كتاب الثواب بإسناد ضعيف عن نافع: أن ابن عمر رضي الله عنه كان مريضا اشتهى سمكة طرية، فالتمست له بالمدينة فلم توجد، ثم وجدت بعد كذا وكذا، فاشتريت له بدرهم ونصف، فشويت وحملت إليه على رغيف.

فقام سائل على الباب فقال للغلام لفها برغيفها وادفعها إليه، فقال له الغلام أصلحك الله، قد اشتهيتها منذ كذا وكذا فلم نجدها، فلما وجدتها اشتريتها بدرهم ونصف، فنحن نعطيه ثمنها، فقال لفها وادفعها.

Hadrat Nāfiʿ *raḥimahullāh* relates that Hadrat Ibn ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* fell ill on one occasion and he expressed his desire to eat fresh fish. His servant boy relates: I looked for fresh fish in Madīnah but could not find any. After some time, I came across fresh fish so I bought one for him for 1½ dirhams. After grilling the fish I placed it on a rotī (flat bread) and presented it to him. In the meantime, a beggar arrived at the door. Ibn ʿUmar said to me: Wrap this fish in the rotī and give it to the beggar. I said: May Allāh *taʿālā* keep you well! You had been expressing your desire to eat fish from so long and we could not obtain one. We eventually got one today and I bought it for you for 1½ dirhams. You should therefore eat it, and I will give the beggar the value of the fish [1½ dirhams]. Hadrat Ibn ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* refused to eat it and insisted that it be given to the

beggar. The boy gave the fish wrapped in the rotī to the beggar.

The boy was a sincere attendant and knew that Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* had an intense desire to eat fish which he obtained after a long time. The boy wanted Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* to eat it so that he regains some of his strength. He therefore said to the beggar: "Is it okay with you if I give you one dirham and you give back the fish to me?"

The beggar agreed. The boy gave him one dirham and took the fish back. He then presented it to Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and also related what transpired between him and the beggar.

Hadrat Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: Return the fish and rotī to the beggar, and let him keep the one dirham as well.

Hadrat Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* then related this Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

قال: إني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول أيما امرئ اشتهى شهوة فرد شهوته وآثر بها على نفسه غفر الله له.[1]

I heard Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam saying: If a person has a desire for something but repulses his desire for Allāh's sake, and gives preference to someone else over his own self, Allāh taʿālā will certainly forgive him.

There is a great lesson for us in this story of Hadrat Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Nowadays Muslims do not worry about others and are fully occupied in fulfilling their own desires. Every person – due to his

[1] إحياء العلوم، ج ٣، ص ٧٩.

greed – is worried about nothing but his self. He does not bother about helping his fellow Muslims whereas it is an excellent means for having one's sins forgiven, as is clear from the above Hadīth of Hadrat Ibn ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*.

The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* enjoyed a distinguished position in their concern for the poor and seeing to their needs. They used to give preference to the needs of others over their own needs.

This was the blessed quality of our seniors of the past. Nowadays, most Muslims have succumbed to self-motives and worrying about their own selves.[1]

Sabr

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَعِيْنُوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ

O believers! Seek help through patience and prayer (in order to lighten the burden of grief from yourselves), surely Allah is with the patient ones (and even more with those who perform their salāh).[2]

Salāh is the greatest form of worship. If Allāh *taʿālā* promises to be with patient ones, this glad tiding will apply even more to those who perform their salāh because it is superior to patience. Patience has an obvious effect in reducing worry and this is clearly observed. What effect does salāh have in this? The first answer is that certain medications have specific effects on the body, and these effects are known through experience. In like manner, there is nothing

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[1] *Gulistān Qanāʿat*, p. 351.
[2] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 153.

to be surprised about if certain actions have specific effects. Salāh without presence of heart is like an ancient medicine. If anyone wishes, he can try it out and will observe it for himself. This will leave no room for him to ask such a question. And if he wishes to investigate the effect of salāh as though he is investigating the active effects of medications, then he can understand this explanation that the basis for lightening the worry of the heart revolves around directing its attention to something else. This causes the heart to be distracted. Thus, if a person is occupied in salāh with presence of heart, he will be focused on the worship [salāh] and the worshipped [Allāh *taʿālā*]. When he repeats this action [salāh], his thoughts about the worrying incident will weaken and gradually disappear.[1]

Sabr literally means to restrain and to seal. In the Sharīʿat it refers to restraining the self from restlessness, the tongue from complaining, and the body parts from striking one's own face and tearing one's own clothes.

Another definition of sabr is that it is one of the highest characteristics of the self which restrains a person from non-praiseworthy and non-commendable actions. It is a power through which one's conditions are set right.

Someone asked Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh*: "What is patience?" He replied: "To swallow a bitter sip of liquid without making a face."

Hadrat Dhun Nūn Misrī *rahimahullāh* said: "Sabr entails keeping away from disagreements, swallowing

[1] *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 87.

bitter miseries and tragedies calmly, and displaying independence despite suffering poverty in livelihood."

The virtue of sabr

Allāh *taʿālā* made sabr a powerful horse which does not fall when it slips, a sword which does not become blunt, an army which is not defeated, and a strong fort which is never demolished. The strong bond which exists between patience and help is similar to the bond between blood brothers. Allāh *taʿālā* praises the patient ones in the Qur'ān, speaks highly of them, and promises to reward them without reckoning. Allāh *taʿālā* is with the patient ones with His absolute guidance, powerful help and clear victory.

Admission into Paradise and salvation from the Hell-fire are destined for the patient ones. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنِّيْ جَزَيْتُهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوْٓا ۙ أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْفَآئِزُوْنَ

I rewarded them today for their patience: it is they who have achieved their goal.[1]

It is the people of patience and gratitude who specifically benefit from Allāh's signs. They surpass others in this grand fortune. Allāh *taʿālā* explains this quality of theirs in four verses of the Qur'ān. For example:

اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُوْرٍ

Surely in this are signs for every patient and grateful [person].[1]

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[1] Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 111.

Sabr is a stake or stump for a believer. When he gets lost, he reverts to it. It is a foundation for him on which he places his reliance. The one who has no patience is devoid of īmān. Even if he does have some īmān, it is extremely weak. Such a believer worships Allāh *taʿālā* on the edge or border. If he experience any good, he is satisfied. If any pain or hardship afflicts him, he turns back on his heels. He is lost in this world and in the Hereafter. Fortunate indeed are those who acquire every type of good by virtue of their patience, and reach the peak of excellence through their gratitude. They then reach Paradise through their two wings of patience and gratitude.

ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ

This is the bounty of Allāh which He gives to whomever He wills. The bounty of Allāh is great.[2]

Bearing in mind that patience and gratitude are two parts of īmān, every person who desires his wellbeing, salvation, and the progress of his self will have to pay full attention to these two fundamentals of īmān and not to disregard them. He will have to do this so that Allāh *taʿālā* may admit him among His best group on the day of Resurrection.[3]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was himself ordered to exercise patience:

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ اٰثِمًا اَوْ كَفُوْرًا

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[1] Sūrah Luqmān, 31: 31.
[2] Sūrah al-Jumuʿah, 62: 4.
[3] *Shifā'-e-Dil.*

Therefore wait patiently for the order of your Sustainer and do not obey any sinner or unbelieving person from among them.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says with reference to Hadrat Ayyūb *ʿalayhis salām*:

اِنَّا وَجَدْنٰهُ صَابِرًا، نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ، اِنَّهُ اَوَّابٌ

We found him patient. How excellent a servant! He was ever turning [to Us].[2]

Shukr

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاذْكُرُوْنِيْ أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوْا لِيْ وَلَا تَكْفُرُوْنِ

Therefore remember Me (for the bounties which I conferred to you), I will remember you (with more kindness and affection) and be thankful to Me (for My favours) and do not be ungrateful (by denying My favours or disobeying Me).[3]

Shukr refers to sincerely praising and speaking highly of those who do good to us.

Shukr is really a collection of three things without which it will not be correct to refer to it as shukr. To acknowledge the favour from one's heart, to express it outwardly, and to make it a means for Allāh's worship and obedience. Shukr is therefore connected to the heart, tongue and external body parts. The heart is for Allāh's love and His recognition. The tongue is for singing His praises. And the body parts

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[1] Sūrah ad-Dahr, 76: 24.
[2] Sūrah Sād, 38: 44.
[3] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 152.

are for His worship and obedience, and to restrain them from His disobedience.

Allāh *taʿālā* has attached shukr to īmān and He says that it is not His objective to punish His servants if they are grateful to Him, believe in Him and have conviction in Him. He says:

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللّٰهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَاٰمَنْتُمْ ط وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيْمًا

What will Allāh do by punishing you if you are thankful and have conviction? Allāh is appreciative, all-knowing.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says that the grateful ones are from among His special servants on whom He showered His favours and bounties:

وَكَذٰلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُوْلُوْٓا أَهٰؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ م بَيْنِنَا ط أَلَيْسَ اللّٰهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشّٰكِرِيْنَ.

In this way We tested some people by means of others so that they may say: "Are these the people whom Allāh favoured among all of us?" Is Allāh not fully aware of the grateful?[2]

Allāh *taʿālā* divided His servants into two categories, those who are grateful and those who are ungrateful. The most abhorred thing in Allāh's sight is unbelief and an unbeliever (ungrateful and thankless person), and the most beloved thing in His sight is gratitude and a grateful person. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِنَّا هَدَيْنٰهُ السَّبِيْلَ اِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَّاِمَّا كَفُوْرًا

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 147.
[2] Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 53.

We have shown him the way: he is either grateful or ungrateful.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَاِذْ تَاَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَاَزِيْدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ اِنَّ عَذَابِيْ لَشَدِيْدٌ.

When your Sustainer proclaimed: If you are grateful I will give you more. And if you are ungrateful, my punishment is certainly severe.[2]

Allāh *taʿālā* preconditioned His additional and extra favours and gifts to gratitude and gratefulness. There is no limit to how much more Allāh *taʿālā* will give just as there is no limit to how much we can thank Him.[3]

Tawakkul

Tawakkul (reliance) refers to relying on Allāh *taʿālā* with all one's heart for repulsing the harmful matters related to this world and the Hereafter, and for acquiring all that is beneficial.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا وَّيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبْ، وَمَنْ يَّتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ.

Whoever fears Allāh, He makes a way out for him. And provides for him from [sources] he did not even

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[1] Sūrah ad-Dahr, 76: 3.
[2] Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 7.
[3] *Shifā'-e-Dil*.

think about. Whoever places his trust in Allāh, He is sufficient for him.[1]

When a person chooses total piety and reliance, Allāh *taʿālā* suffices for his matters related to this world and his Dīn. Ḥadrat ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

لو أنكم كنتم تتوكلون على الله حق توكله لرزقكم كما ترزق الطير تغدو خماصا وتروح بطانا.[2]

If you place your trust and reliance on Allāh taʿālā as you ought to, He will give you sustenance as He gives to birds which leave with an empty stomach in the morning and return with their bellies filled in the evening.

Imām Abū Ḥātim Rāzī *raḥimahullāh* said that this Ḥadīth is the foundation in the chapter on tawakkul, and that it is from one of the greatest causes through which sustenance is acquired.

Ḥadrat Saʿīd ibn Jubayr *raḥimahullāh* said that tawakkul is a collator of īmān. Practising tawakkul does not negate the choosing of the means which are attached to Allāh's decrees because this is how Allāh *taʿālā* treats His creation. This is why He ordered us to adopt the means together with the adoption of tawakkul. Thus, it is also an act of worship to strive and work for the means through one's body parts; and to place one's trust in Allāh *taʿālā* with one's heart is īmān. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

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[1] Sūrah aṭ-Ṭalāq, 65: 2-3.

[2] رواه الترمذي.

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا خُذُوْا حِذْرَكُمْ فَانْفِرُوْا ثُبَاتٍ أَوِ انْفِرُوْا جَمِيْعًا

O believers! Take up your weapons, then go forth in separate detachments or altogether.[1]

Hadrat Sahl *rahimahullāh* said: If a person criticizes and speaks out against hard work and striving, he has actually made an objection against the Sunnat. And the one who criticizes tawakkul has actually criticized īmān. Placing his reliance on Allāh *taʿālā* was a life-condition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and adopting the means was his Sunnat. Thus, the one who practises on his life-condition will never abandon his Sunnat.

Someone said: To abstain from adopting the means entails making the Sharīʿat a target of one's criticism. And to believe in the means alone entails criticizing tauhīd.[2]

Types of actions

Man does three types of actions:

1. Acts of worship and obedience which Allāh *taʿālā* instructed His servants to carry out, and made them the means for their entry into Paradise and salvation from the Hell-fire. From among them, placing one's trust in Allāh *taʿālā* and asking Him for His help are essential. The reason why it is necessary to ask Allāh *taʿālā* for help is that no one apart from Him has the strength and power. When Allāh *taʿālā* wills for something to happen, it will happen. If not, it will not happen. Thus, anyone who has shortcomings as

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 71.
[2] *Shifā'-e-Dil*, p. 169.

regards these essentials will be eligible for punishment in the Hereafter as per Allāh's decree.

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ *raḥimahullāh* said: "Carry out actions like the actions of the one whose actions themselves will give him salvation (i.e. with genuine sincerity and devotion). And place your trust in Allāh *taʿālā* like the one who is convinced that he will only receive what is decreed for him."

2. Actions which Allāh *taʿālā* introduced in the world in the form of habits and ordered His servants to adopt them. For example, to eat when you are hungry, drink water when you are thirsty, sit in the shade when it is sunny, keep yourself warm when it is cold, and so on. As regards these matters, it is necessary for man to follow the means related to them. If a person displays lethargy in this regard and discards the means despite having the power to resort to them, and he then suffers loss on account of this, he will be labelled a transgressor and will be eligible for punishment.

3. Actions which Allāh *taʿālā* introduced as general habits, but He sometimes goes against the habit with whomever He wills. There are several types. For example, the 'ulamā' differ with regard to a person who has absolutely full trust and reliance in Allāh *taʿālā* – is it better for him to take medicines when he falls ill or is it better for him to take them?

There are two well-known views in this regard. Imām Aḥmad *raḥimahullāh* is of the view that it is better for him to place his trust in Allāh *taʿālā*. This is for the person whose trust and reliance in Allāh *taʿālā* is very strong and firm. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said in this regard:

يدخل الجنة من أمتي سبعون ألفا بغير حساب. ثم قال: هم الذين لا يتطيرون، ولا يسترقون، ولا يكتوون، وعلى ربهم يتوكلون.[1]

Seventy thousand people from my ummat will enter Paradise without reckoning. He then said: They are the ones who do not take bad omens, do not resort to spells and charms, and do not burn their skins. Rather they place their trust in Allāh.

Those who are of the view that it is better to take medicines support their view by saying that it was a continued practice of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to take medicines. Obviously, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* will opt for what is superior and better. The above Ḥadīth applies to resorting to means which could be adulterated with polytheism. The proof of this is that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* mentioned it with taking bad omens and burning of the skin, both of which are reprehensible.

Mujāhid, ʿIkramah, Nakhaʿī and many other senior scholars of the past say that to abstain from the means totally is permitted to the person whose heart's inclination towards the creation has been severed completely.

Is-ḥāq ibn Rāhwayh *raḥimahullāh* was asked: "Is it permissible for a person to go out into a jungle without provisions for himself?" He replied: "If the person is on the level of Ḥaḍrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Jubayr *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* in his reliance on Allāh *taʿālā*, he may go without provisions. If not, he must take something with him."

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[1] رواه البخاري.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent reconciliation of the issue. Look at how easily he solved the issue! May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him.

Zuhd

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَا هٰذِهِ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا اِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَّلَعِبٌ، وَاِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ، لَوْ كَانُوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ.

The life of this world is nothing but amusement and play. As for the abode of the Hereafter, that is the true life. If only they possessed understanding.[1]

This world is referred to as play and amusement. It is like playing around and jumping for a short while, after which the fun ends. This is the case with this world. However, actions which entail obedience to Allāh's injunctions are not included in this; they are listed as matters related to the Hereafter. Their fruits will be enjoyed in the Hereafter.

This world is sweet and green

عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: إن هذه الدنيا حلوة خضرة، وإن الله تعالى مستخلفكم فيها فينظر كيف تعلمون، فاتقوا الدنيا واتقوا النساء.

Ḥaḍrat Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: This world is sweet and green. Allāh taʿālā is to appoint you as a deputy in this world so that He may

[1] Sūrah al-ʿAnkabūt, 29: 64.

see what you do. Thus, be wary of this world and be wary of women.

The above Hadīth refers to this world as sweet and green in the sense that it appears very nice and also enjoyable when utilizing it. However, just as a sweet or green item decays very quickly, the same can be said of this world.

In another Hadīth Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: I am most astonished at the person who believes that the Hereafter is eternal but still strives for this world of deception.

The previously quoted Hadīth warns us against becoming too occupied with this world, and to protect ourselves from the temptations of women. What this means is that special attention must be given to safeguarding ourselves from them, and to adopt the precautions taught to us by the Sharīʿat. For example, to lower our gaze, to abstain from intermingling with them, and so on.[1]

The life of the Hereafter is the real life

عن أنس رضي الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: اللّٰهُمَّ لا عيش إلا عيش الآخرة. (متفق عليه)

Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: O Allāh! There is no real life except the life of the Hereafter.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* made this statement on two occasions. The first was in the Battle of Khandaq when the Muslims were

[1] *Raudah as-Sālihīn Sharh Riyād as-Sālihīn*, vol. 3, p. 161.

experiencing extremely difficult conditions when digging the trench, and they were saying:

نحن الذين بايعوا محمدا – على الجهاد ما بقينا أبدا

We are the ones who pledged to Muḥammad that we will wage jihād for as long as we are alive.

In reply to this, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said

اللّٰهُمَّ لا عيش إلا عيش الآخرة، فاغفر الأنصار والمهاجرة

O Allāh! There is no real life except the life of the Hereafter. Forgive, then, the Anṣār and Muhājirūn.

These words were uttered to encourage the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* and prompt them on so that they do not become restless on account of fatigue and tiredness. What it meant is that this is a few days' life after which the real life of the Hereafter will commence where they will live in peace and comfort forever.

The second time Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* made this statement was on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage when there was a large group of Muslims with him. Here too, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* directed the attention of the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* towards the Hereafter and to not become proud and haughty on seeing their large numbers and strength. These are things of this temporary life. The real life is what is to come in the Hereafter where there will be eternal comfort and rest.[1]

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[1] *Raudah aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn*, vol. 3, p. 162.

We now take the opportunity of quoting from *Īthār-e-Ākhirat* which is a translation of *Kitāb az-Zuhd Wa ar-Raqā'iq* of Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Mubārak *raḥimahullāh*. The introduction to this translation was penned by Hadrat Maulānā Habīb ar-Raḥmān Sāḥib Aʿẓamī *raḥimahullāh*. Parts of this introduction are quoted here:

The definition of zuhd

The third category is the zuhd of the ascetics. They are the ones who remain resolute on the path of moving towards Allāh *taʿālā*. Their zuhd is of two types. One is to become independent of the entire world. This does not mean that they do not own anything or do not exercise their will over anything. Neither does it mean that they absolve themselves from everything and remain aloof from everyone. Rather, their independence from the world means that their hearts are totally empty of everything of this world, and filled with peace and tranquillity. In such a situation, even if they own the world, neither will their hearts incline to it nor will they have anything to do with it. Based on this, zuhd does not mean that you have to remove the world from your control while it remains in your heart. Rather, piety means that its love be expelled from your heart even if the entire world is under your control.

This was the situation with the Khulafā' Rāshidīn and ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *raḥimahullāh*. They were icons of piety despite having control over the treasures of this world. In fact, this was the condition of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* when Allāh *taʿālā* opened the countries of the world to him. His zuhd and piety progressed and increased. This is supported by the following famous Hadīth:

ليس الزهد في الدنيا بتحريم الحلال ولا إضاعة المال، ولكن الزهد في الدنيا أن تكون بما في يد الله أوثق منك بما في يدك، وأن تكون في ثواب المصيبة إذا أصبت بها أرغب منك فيها لو أنها بقيت لك.

Abstinence from this world does not entail making the lawful unlawful nor destroying your wealth. Rather, it means you must have more conviction in the bounty which Allāh has under His control than what you presently have with you. And that when – instead of receiving a bounty - you are afflicted by a tragedy, you have more hope for being rewarded for the tragedy than you are for the continuation of the bounty.[1]

Three levels of zuhd

1st level

Zuhd for the sake of saving one's self from the punishment, reckoning and other dangers. This is the zuhd of those who fear Allāh *taʿālā*.

2nd level

Zuhd in the hope of acquiring those rewards and bounties which Allāh *taʿālā* promised. This is the zuhd of those who have hopes in Allāh *taʿālā*. They cast aside the comforts of this world in the hope of receiving them in the Hereafter.

3rd level

This is the highest level of zuhd. It is neither for freedom from calamities nor for the acquisition of comforts and luxuries. Rather, it is out of a yearning to behold Allāh *taʿālā*. This is the zuhd of those who

[1] *Īthār Ākhirat*, p. 9.

have truly recognized Allāh *taʿālā* (the ʿārifīn). The joy of beholding Allāh *taʿālā* compared to all the other pleasures of Paradise can be compared to the joy of having the kingdom of the entire world to having a small bird under one's control.[1]

Hadrat Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* wrote a book titled *az-Zuhd*. Its introduction contains an enlightening discussion on the subject of zuhd. The beginning section is translated here.

The reality and virtue of zuhd

The literal meaning of zuhd is to turn away from something and to abstain from it. For example, when we say *zahida fīhi wa ʿanhu* it means that he expressed his disinterest in it and kept away from it.

Observe the following usages:

1. *az-zāhid al-ʿābid* – a person engaged in worship.
2. *at-tazahhud at-taʿabbud* – discarding the world for the sake of worship.
3. *ash-shay' az-zahīd* – something which is insignificant and of no value.

Zuhd means to keep away from something while acting against the desires of the carnal self, to be pleased easily, to be convinced of its permissibility, and to leave out the additional things for Allāh's sake.

The objective of zuhd:

To turn away from this world and the positions and ranks which it offers.

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[1] *Īthār Ākhirat*, p. 15.

The virtue of zuhd:

Zuhd is one of the lofty stations of the seekers. Zuhd refers to turning away from the desiring of a certain thing as long as there is no good in it. The prerequisite of "liking" must be found in the sense that the thing must be liked in itself.

A zāhid is generally classified as a person who discards this world. The one who turns away from everything apart from Allāh *taʿālā* is really a complete zāhid. As for the one who turns away from this world so that he may enjoy the pleasures of Paradise, he is also a zāhid but lower in rank than the previous person.

Understand well that zuhd does not mean that you have to discard wealth. Rather, one must spend it generously and open-heartedly.

In reality, zuhd entails discarding the world for the sake of knowledge, while considering the world to be insignificant in comparison to the Hereafter.

A zāhid is one who has understood that the world is really like ice which will melt and come to an end, while the Hereafter is like a pearl – the desire for which remains eternal. The Qur'ān says in this regard:

قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيْلٌ، وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقٰى

Say: The enjoyment of this world is little and the Hereafter is better for the pious.[1]

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللهِ بَاقٍ

[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 77.

All that is by you is bound to come to an end, and all that is by Allāh is everlasting.[1]

The following instruction of Allāh *taʿālā* is sufficient to demonstrate the virtue of zuhd:

لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ اِلٰى مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهٖ اَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ.

Do not cast your eyes on those things which We have bestowed as an enjoyment to different kinds of people, nor be grieved over them. And lower your wing for the believers.[2]

ʿIbādat

ʿIbādat or worship is the objective of life. In his magnum opus, *Riyāḍ aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn*, Ḥaḍrat ʿAllāmah Muḥīy ad-Dīn an-Nawawī *raḥimahullāh*, discusses the issue of ʿibādat immediately after his introduction. In his discussion, he quotes the following words of Allāh *taʿālā*:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ. مَآ اُرِيْدُ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ رِّزْقٍ وَّمَآ اُرِيْدُ اَنْ يُّطْعِمُوْنَ.

I created jinn and man solely for My worship. I do not want any sustenance from them nor do I want them to feed Me.[3]

We will therefore quote this verse with its translation and a few additional points. He writes:

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[1] Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 96.
[2] Sūrah al-Ḥijr, 15: 88:
[3] Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 56.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ. مَآ اُرِيْدُ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ رِّزْقٍ وَّمَآ اُرِيْدُ اَنْ يُّطْعِمُوْنَ. (سورة الذاريات: ٥٦-٥٧)

هذا تصريح بأنهم خلقوا للعبادة، فحق عليهم الإعتناء بما خلقوا له، والإعراض عن حظوظ الدنيا بالزهادة، فإنها دار نفاد لا محل إخلاد، ومركب عبور لا منزل حبور، ومشرع انفصام لا موطن دوام. فلهذا كان الايقاظ من أهلها هم العباد، وأعقل الناس فيها هم الزهاد.

قال تعالى: إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنْزَلْنٰهُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهٖ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ ط حَتّٰٓى إِذَآ أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَآ أَنَّهُمْ قٰدِرُوْنَ عَلَيْهَآ لا أَتٰهَآ أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنٰهَا حَصِيْدًا كَأَنْ لَّمْ تَغْنَ بِالْأَمْسِ ط كَذٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُوْنَ. (سورة يونس: ٢٤).

والايات في هذا المعنى كثيرة، ولقد أحسن القائل:

إن لله عبادا فطنا، طلقوا الدنيا وخافوا الفتنا، نظروا فيها فلما علموا أنها ليست لحي وطنا، جعلوها لجة واتخذوا صالح الأعمال فيها سفنا.

I created jinn and man solely for My worship. I do not want any sustenance from them nor do I want them to feed Me.[1]

This is a clear indication that they were created for worship. It is therefore their duty to pay particular attention to what they were created for and to turn

[1] Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 56.

away from the fascinations of the world by remaining abstinent. This is because the world is a fleeting place and not a place of eternity. It is merely a conveyance to cross over, and not a place to settle down and enjoy. It is a pass that will be severed and not an eternal abode. Therefore, the wisest inhabitants of the world are those who are the true worshippers, and the most intelligent inhabitants are those who are abstinent.

Allāh taʿālā says: This worldly life is only like water which We sent down from the sky, emerging thereby intermingled plants of the earth of which man and animals eat, until – when the earth assumes its splendour and is beautified, and its inhabitants think that they will have control over it – down comes Our order by night or by day and We made it a mown heap as if it had not flourished yesterday. In this way We expound the signs to those who ponder.

There are many other verses of similar meaning. A poet rightly said:

Allāh taʿālā has servants who are intelligent. They divorced the world and feared temptations. They looked at the world and, when they realized that it is not an abode for the living, they considered it to be a deep ocean [which can only be traversed by ship] and adopted good deeds as ships in it.

Note: By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā* I had the opportunity of studying *Riyāḍ aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn* of ʿAllāmah Nawawī *raḥimahullāh* under Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* around the year 1375 A.H./1954 in Tāl Narjā, district Aʿẓamgarh. This area is now known as Mau. When Ḥaḍrat read the above-quoted couplets, he asked me to write it separately on a piece of paper which I did. Ḥaḍrat then placed it under his pillow and it remained with him for a long time. This

demonstrates Hadrat's affinity with worship and his constant turning to Allāh *taʿālā*.

I have heard that Maulānā Hakīm Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Sāhib, a khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*, used to say: "If anyone wants to see someone performing salāh with khushūʿ (humility), he should look at Maulānā Wasīyyullāh Sāhib."

On one occasion, Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* was performing fajr salāh in Gorukhpūr in the masjid of Maulānā Thanā'ullāh Sāhib. I was also present in this congregational salāh. When the imām, Qārī Muhammad Mubīn Sāhib, read the verse:

اِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيْدٌ

Surely the grasp of your Sustainer is severe.

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* screamed unwittingly.

On another occasion, when the following verse was recited in salāh, he screamed so loudly that the entire masjid reverberated.

اِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا، لِّلطّٰغِيْنَ مَاٰبًا، لّٰبِثِيْنَ فِيْهَا اَحْقَابًا

Surely Hell is lying in wait. An abode for the transgressors. Abiding therein for ages.[1]

I myself heard Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* saying that the severest verse for the unbelievers is:

فَذُوْقُوْا فَلَنْ نَّزِيْدَكُمْ اِلَّا عَذَابًا

[1] Sūrah an-Naba', 78: 21-23.

Now taste [the punishment]. We will only add to your punishment.

I make duʿā' to Allāh *taʿālā* to confer us with the bounties of enthusiasm for worship and for internal spiritual ecstasy. Āmīn. (compiler)

In his commentary to the verse:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

I created jinn and man solely for My worship.

The author of *Tafsīr Mazharī* writes:

The obvious import of this verse is that Allāh *taʿālā* wills for man and jinn to worship Him and be obedient to Him. And nothing can happen against the will of Allāh *taʿālā*. Why, then, do so many humans and jinn commit kufr and polytheism, and how can they be disobedient?

In order to remove this doubt, Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* provided an explanatory translation of this verse as follows: I created jinn and man with the express purpose of ordering them to worship Me. In other words, to make them accountable for My injunctions. This meaning is expressed in another verse:

وَمَا اُمِرُوْٓا اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْا اِلٰهًا وَّاحِدًا

They have been instructed to worship just one deity.

The above explanation of Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* has been quoted by al-Baghawī *rahimahullāh*.

Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* translates the word *liyaʿbudūni* as *li yaʿrifūni* – so that they may recognize Me. Even the unbelievers recognize the existence of Allāh *taʿālā*. He says in this regard:

وَلَئِنْ سَاَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُوْلُنَّ اللّٰهُ

If you were to ask them who created them, they will answer, Allāh.

Some ʿulamā' translate the word *liyaʿbudūni* as, so that they may submit before Me and be obedient to Me. The literal meaning of ʿibādat is to lower and humble one's self. This is what is meant here. Everyone – an unbeliever and an unbeliever – has to submit before Allāh's decision. No one can refuse to carry out the purpose for which he was created. In fact, no one can even extricate himself from the objective of his creation.

Some commentators of the Qur'ān are of the view that ʿibādat refers to acknowledging tauhīd. In other words, man and jinn were created for acknowledging the oneness of Allāh *taʿālā*. A believer obviously beseeches Allāh *taʿālā* on every given occasion – whether he is experiencing ease or pain, hardship or comfort. Nonetheless, even an unbeliever calls on Allāh *taʿālā* when he is engulfed in a misery from which there is no way out. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاِذَا رَكِبُوْا فِي الْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا اللّٰهَ مُخْلِصِيْنَ لَهُ الدِّيْنَ

When they board a ship, they supplicate to Allāh with total devotion.

The author of *Madārik at-Tanzīl* says that unbelievers will also acknowledge tauhīd in the Hereafter. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ اِلَّا اَنْ قَالُوْا وَاللّٰهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِيْنَ

They will then be left with no deceit except that they will say: We swear by Allāh who is our Sustainer that we were not of the polytheists.[1]

Even if the unbelievers reject tauḥīd in this world, it will not be wrong to say that they were created for tauḥīd (because everyone will acknowledge it in the Hereafter).

I say that the most correct view is the one of Ḥaḍrat ʿAlī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* while the others are weak. The objectors quote a verse and a Ḥadīth to lend support to their doubt and misgiving.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ

We created many jinn and humans for Hell.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

كل ميسر لما خلق له

For every person that task has been made easy for him for which he has been created. (In other words, he is inspired to carry out that particular task).

In order to save one's self from the above-mentioned objection, Kalbī, Ḍaḥḥāk and Sufyān Thaurī *raḥimahullāh* said that this verse refers to jinn and humans who are perfect in their obedience to Allāh *taʿālā*. This explanation is supported by the recitation of Ḥaḍrat Ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He reads this verse as follows:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

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[1] Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 23.

I created jinn and man from the believers solely for My worship.

I am of the view that the correct meaning of this verse is this: I created jinn and man (all jinn and all humans) capable of My worship. In other words, every person has the capability and ability to worship Allāh *taʿālā*. This explanation is supported by a Ḥadīth of *Saḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Saḥīḥ Muslim* in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Every child is born on a natural disposition of Islam. It is his parents who make him a Jew, Christian or Magean. This is just like how the young of an animal is born fully and perfectly formed. Have you seen an animal born with its nose and ears cut off?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then recited this verse:

فِطْرَةَ اللهِ الَّتِيْ فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيْلَ لِخَلْقِ اللهِ

The natural disposition which Allāh instilled into mankind. There is no change in the creation of Allāh.[1]

This explanation is in line with that of Ḥadrat ʿAlī's *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*. The import of this verse is the denigration of the unbelievers because they were given a sound disposition but they destroyed it.[2]

ʿAbdīyyat

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْ أَسْرٰى بِعَبْدِهٖ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِيْ بٰرَكْنَا حَوْلَهٗ لِنُرِيَهٗ مِنْ اٰيٰتِنَا ط إِنَّهٗ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْرُ.

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[1] Sūrah ar-Rūm, 30: 30.
[2] *Tafsīr Maẓharī*, vol. 11, p. 118.

Exalted is He who took His servant by night from the Sacred Masjid to the Aqsā Masjid - the precincts of which We have blessed – so that We may show him some signs of Our power. He alone is all-hearing, all-seeing.[1]

Perfection in īmān and action is known as ʿabdīyyat or servitude. In other words, to accept every word of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* without any ifs and buts, to practise on them, and to obliterate one's own desires for the pleasure of Allāh *taʿālā*. If we were to think about it, we have a real slave relationship with Allāh *taʿālā*. It is possible for a person to become free when he is a slave of someone, but not from the slavery of Allāh *taʿālā*. This slavery can never be removed from our necks because freedom from this slavery will entail that – Allāh forbid – we no longer remain servants and Allāh *taʿālā* no longer remains. The thing which man was sent into this world to acquire is this very same ʿabdīyyat. In other words, man has been sent into this world so that he acquires ʿabdīyyat by carrying out Allāh's orders and abstaining from His prohibitions. Orders and prohibitions are, by and large, connected to actions and deeds. This is irrespective of whether they are definitional acts of worship, dealings, social relationships or ethics. Fulfilling all is known as ʿabdīyyat.[2]

Perfect ʿabdīyyat entails man handing himself over to Allāh *taʿālā* and being pleased with whatever Allāh *taʿālā* wills for him.[3]

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[1] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 1.
[2] *Tasawwuf Wa Sulūk*.
[3] *Anfās ʿĪsā*, p. 225.

Handing one's self totally is ʿabdīyyat while claiming a distinguished positions for one's self is its total opposite. For example, if Allāh *taʿālā* provides you good food and drink, and you choose to live in poverty, it amounts to ungratefulness, disregard for Allāh's bounties, and the opposite of obedience. This is because just as the Sharīʿat commands you to pay your workers and provide them with food and clothing, it instructs you to provide comfort to your own body. Just as your worker is Allāh's creation and under Allāh's ownership, so are you. This is why you too cannot do anything to yourself without Allāh's permission. If you are feeding and clothing your worker by Allāh's order, the same Master orders you to serve your own self because your life also belongs to Allāh *taʿālā*. In short, an ʿārif fulfils the rights of his self because it is Allāh's order.[1]

The rank of ʿabdīyyat

Hadrat ʿAllāmah ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Shaʿrānī *rahimahullāh* wrote a book titled *Anwār al-Qudsīyyah Fī Ādāb al-ʿAbūdīyyah*. The erudite Hadīth scholar, Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad ʿUthmānī *rahimahullāh* translated this book under the instruction of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. It is a most enlightening and useful book which every scholar ought to study. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

A translation of the beginning section of the introduction of this book is presented here.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*. Peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. On Monday, 17 Rajab 931 A.H. my heart

[1] *Basā'ir Hakīmul Ummat*, p. 345.

experienced an intense yearning to acquire the stations of the Auliyā'. When I looked at my condition as a whole, I felt that it amounted to nothing. Consequently, my life became bitter and turbid. I found that I was not pleased with the decree of Allāh *taʿālā* to the extent that I feared a bad death and Allāh's wrath and anger. While in this state of anxiety, I raised my head and walked out until I reached Nasṯāṯ, an old residential area of Egypt.

While I was sitting in Nasṯāṯ, I was overcome by a state of semi-consciousness and I heard a voice saying: O My servant! If I were to apprise you of the entire universe; teach you the number of sand particles; the names of every iota; the different categories of plants and their names, and their ages; the different types of animals and their ages; the lineages of all wild animals, birds and insects, and also of all other animals; the unique workings of the heavens and earth; Paradise and Hell and whatever is exposed and hidden therein; send down rains through your supplications; bring the dead to life at your hands; and enable you to perform every other supernatural feat which I gave to My believing servants, you will not reach any level whatsoever of My ʿabdīyyat.

Before the voice could complete its speech, I lost all desire of acquiring any of the stations of the Auliyā' – not in this world nor in the Hereafter. When this desire left my heart completely and the fear which I was apprehending previously was also repulsed, I praised and thanked Allāh *taʿālā* over this bounty.

I now want to speak about the actual import of the caller and expound on the reality of this inspiration which I received. I intend to embellish my writing with the statements of some of the ʿārifīn and thereby

go into some details on this theme. An ignorant person who does not know anything about the levels of revelation must not assume that I consider this to be a revelation similar to the revelation of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. And that I – Allāh forbid – am making claims to receiving revelation.

There are several possibilities with regard to the identity of the caller himself. He could have been an angel, a walī who was hidden from me, the spirituality of a walī, a pious jinn, or Khidr *ʿalayhis salām* because he is still alive and existing to this day; he has not died as yet. We have met some people who met Khidr *ʿalayhis salām* and learnt the Sufi way from him. This discussion was about the caller. Understand it well.[1]

ʿAbdīyyat was a special characteristic of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and his life was a unique indication of his level of ʿabdīyyat. This is clearly visible in his supplications. The loftiness of his message can be gauged from the Sharīʿat, and the loftiness of his ʿabdīyyat can be observed from his supplications. A senior elder said: We can, to a certain extent, gauge the loftiness of messenger-ship but we cannot work out his level of ʿabdīyyat.

Observe the following supplication of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

اَللّٰهُمَ اِنِّيْ عَبْدُكَ وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ وَابْنُ اَمَتِكَ، نَاصِيَتِيْ بِيَدِكَ، مَاضٍ فِيَّ حُكْمُكَ، عَدْلٌ فِيَّ قَضَآؤُكَ. اَسْاَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اِسْمٍ هُوَ لَكَ سَمَّيْتَ بِهِ نَفْسَكَ، اَوْ اَنْزَلْتَهُ فِيْ كِتَابِكَ، اَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ اَحَدًا مِّنْ خَلْقِكَ، اَوِ اسْتَاْثَرْتَ

[1] *Ādāb Zindagī*, p. 21.

بِهِ فِيْ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ، اَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْاٰنَ الْعَظِيْمَ رَبِيْعَ قَلْبِيْ، وَنُوْرَ بَصَرِيْ، وَجَلَاءَ حُزْنِيْ، وَذَهَابَ هَمِّيْ.

O Allāh! I am Your servant, the son of your male and female servant. I am solely under Your control. Your order concerning me is executed. Your judgement concerning me is absolutely just. I ask You by means of every name of Yours with which You named Yourself, which You revealed in Your book, which You taught to anyone of Your creation, or which You reserved with You in the knowledge of the unseen, that You make the glorious Qur'ān the fountain of my heart, the light of my eyes, the eliminator of my grief, and the remover of my worries.

Note: Ponder over how the Sufis negate their condition and rank, and the self-obliteration with which they distinguish themselves! And then look at the level of Rasūlullāh's self-obliteration – he denies ownership of even his hands and legs! Is there any Sufi who self-obliterated himself by denying his own body parts! This shows that the self-obliteration and ʿabdīyyat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was supreme and the highest. (compiler)

Rasūlullāh's ʿabdīyyat

Although Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was the essence of this universe, the Qur'ān repeatedly emphasises:

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوْحٰى إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلٰهُكُمْ إِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ

Say: I am a human like you. It has been revealed to me that your Allāh is one Allāh.[1]

One point needs to be pondered over. Many of the senior Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* have special titles. For example, Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* was Kalīmullāh, Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* was Khalīlullāh, Hadrat ʿĪsā *ʿalayhis salām* was Rūhullāh. On the other hand, although Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was the noblest of the Prophet *ʿalayhis salām*, what was his title? What is that distinguishing attribute which is attached to his name in the kalimah tauhīd, in our salāh and in the salutations which we send to him? It is that of risālat (messenger-ship) and ʿabdīyyat:

اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ

I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.

Even here we see the attribute of ʿabdīyyat (servitude) mentioned before that of messenger-ship. On one occasion, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* cursed certain unbelievers. The following verse was revealed:

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوْبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظٰلِمُوْنَ

You have no authority – Allāh will either accept their repentance or punish them because they are wrongdoers.[2]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was extremely desirous of the unbelievers receiving

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[1] Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 110.
[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 128.

guidance and embracing Islam. Allāh *taʿālā* then revealed this verse:

اِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِيْ مَنْ اَحْبَبْتَ

You cannot guide whom you like.[1]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* sought forgiveness for ʿAbdullāh ibn Ubayy [the leader of the hypocrites]. Allāh *taʿālā* revealed the following verse:

اِسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ ط إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِيْنَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَّغْفِرَ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ.

[It is the same] whether you ask forgiveness for them or not. Even if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, Allāh will never forgive them.[2]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was very particular on every occasion and emphasised this point repeatedly that no one should praise him more than the level of moderation, and which could reach the level of polytheism. He often said:

لا تطروني كما اطرت اليهود والنصارى[3]

Do not go beyond the limits in praising me as was the case with the Jews and Christians with regard to their Prophets.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was walking on a path on one occasion. A person saw him suddenly and was so overcome by awe that he began

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[1] Sūrah al-Qasas, 28: 56.
[2] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 80.
[3] صحيح البخاري، ج ١، ص ٤٩٠.

trembling. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Do not fear. I am the son of a Qurayshī woman who used to dry meat and eat it."[1]

When the delegation of Banū ʿĀmir came to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, they said: "You are our sayyid and master." Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh is the sayyid." They said: "But you are the most superior among us." Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Okay, you may say that but be careful that Shayṭān does not make you his representatives." The original Arabic wording of this reads as follows:

قولوا بقولكم ولا يستجرينكم الشيطان.[2]

A person addressed Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as follows: "O our master! And the son of our master! O the best among us and the son of the best among us!" Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "O people! Fear Allāh! Do not allow Shayṭān to topple you. I am Muḥammad the son of ʿAbdullāh. I am Allāh's servant and Messenger. I do not like it when you elevate me to a level higher than what Allāh conferred to me."[3]

Just ponder! These words are not impermissible when applied to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Despite this, he was most concerned about protecting tauḥīd from every possible taint of polytheism.[4]

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[1] *Shamā'il Tirmidhī*, p. 256.

[2] الأدب المفرد، ص ٣٠١.

[3] *Musnad Aḥmad*.

[4] *Tafsīrī Nukāt*, vol. 1, p. 447.

Difference between ʿibādat and ʿubūdīyyat

ليس أشرف من العبودية في صفات المخلوقين، وهي الرضا بما يفعل الرب، والعبادة ما يرضيه، والعبودية أقوى من العبادة لبقاء في العقبى بخلاف العبادة.[1]

From among the attributes of the creations, there is no nobler quality that servitude. Servitude entails being pleased with the decrees of Allāh taʿālā. On the other hand, worship refers to pleasing Allāh taʿālā through worship. Servitude is stronger than worship because the former will remain in the Hereafter, but not the latter.

Amānat

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ اللهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمٰنٰتِ إِلٰى أَهْلِهَا ۙ وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوْا بِالْعَدْلِ ۭ إِنَّ اللهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهٖ ۭ إِنَّ اللهَ كَانَ سَمِيْعًا بَصِيْرًا.

Surely Allāh orders you to convey the trusts to those who are entitled to them, and that when you judge among people, you judge with justice. Allāh gives you a good advice. Surely Allāh is all-hearing, all-seeing.[2]

ʿUthmān ibn Talḥah relates: During pre-Islamic times, we used to open the Kaʿbah on Mondays and Thursdays, and people would get an opportunity to go inside. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

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[1] مراقي الفلاح، ص ١٥٥.

[2] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 58.

and a few Sahābah came to me for permission to enter the Kaʿbah (ʿUthmān ibn Talhah was not a Muslim at the time). He did not give permission and spoke very harshly to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who bore his response with absolute forbearance and tolerance. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* then said: "O ʿUthmān! There may come a day when you will see the key to the Kaʿbah in my hand. And I will have the choice of giving it to whomever I wish." ʿUthmān ibn Talhah said: "If that were to happen, the Quraysh will be disgraced and destroyed." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "No. The Quraysh will be honoured on that day."

[ʿUthmān ibn Talhah continues]: When I thought about the matter and checked my heart, I was convinced that whatever he said is bound to take place. I immediately decided to become a Muslim but the attitude of my people changed and they began castigating me. This is why I could not fulfil my decision [to become a Muslim]. On the day of the Conquest of Makkah, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* called for me and asked me for the key of the Kaʿbah. I handed it over to him.

Some narrations state that ʿUthmān ibn Talhah had taken the key and went on top of the Kaʿbah. Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* took the key by force from him and gave it to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. After going inside and performing salāh there, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* emerged and said to me [ʿUthmān] while giving the key to me: "Here, this key will now remain with your family until the day of Resurrection. Anyone who takes away the key from you will be a tyrant." In other words, no one has the right to take the key

from you. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* advised him further: "Whatever income you earn for this service to the Kaʿbah must be used in accordance with the rules of the Sharīʿat."

ʿUthmān ibn Ṭalḥah relates: When I began walking away happily with the key, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* called for me and said: "O ʿUthmān! Has what I had predicted been realized or not?" I recalled what Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had said before the Hijrah – that you will see this key in my hand one day. I said: "Your words have most certainly been realized." I then read the kalimah and became a Muslim.[1]

Ḥaḍrat ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* relates that when Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* emerged from the Kaʿbah on that day, he was reading the following verse:

إِنَّ اللهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمٰنٰتِ إِلٰى أَهْلِهَا

Surely Allāh orders you to convey the trusts to those who are entitled to them.

Ḥaḍrat ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "This is the first time I heard Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* reading this verse."

This verse was obviously revealed inside the Kaʿbah. In order to fulfil the order of this verse, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* called for ʿUthmān ibn Ṭalḥah a second time and handed over the key to him because when ʿUthmān had given it to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he had said: "I am giving you this key as a trust." Strictly

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[1] *Maẓharī.*

speaking, it was not correct for him to say this. Rather, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* could have done as he wished. However, the Qur'ān also took an outward form of a trust into consideration and advised Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to return the key to ʿUthmān. This, not withstanding the fact that Hadrat ʿAlī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* had requested Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to give it to them on the basis that just as the office of gatekeeper of the Haram and providing zam zam water to the pilgrims were in their family, the honour of having the key to the Kaʿbah should also be given to them. However, in keeping with the order of the above verse, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* declined their request and returned the key to ʿUthmān ibn Talhah.[1]

The discussion to this point revolved around the circumstances behind the revelation of this verse. The scholars unanimously state that even though a verse may have been revealed on a specific occasion, its application is general and has to be adhered to by the entire ummat.

Now observe the meaning of this verse:

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ اللهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمٰنٰتِ إِلٰى أَهْلِهَا

Surely Allāh orders you to convey the trusts to those who are entitled to them.

The addressees of this instruction could be Muslims in general, and could be specifically those who are

[1] *Tafsīr Mazharī.*

rulers and leaders. The more obvious meaning is that it addresses every such person who has been entrusted with a trust. This would include the laity and the rulers.

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* writes with reference to amānat:

The central ethical trait around which dealings and transactions revolve is the quality of integrity and trustworthiness. It means that a person must be trustworthy in his business, and give the full due to whoever is eligible for it. This is known as amānat in Arabic.

Amānat is not confined to money, coins, properties and other items of monetary value as is generally understood. Rather, it extends to every monetary, legal and ethical form of trustworthiness. If someone has entrusted you with an item and he asks you for it, you must give it to him without any hesitation. This is amānat. Fulfilling the right which someone has over you is also amānat. Concealing the secret of a person is amānat. If you are present in an assembly, then whatever is discussed there must remain there. It must not be conveyed to others whereby it becomes a cause of conflict. This is also amānat. A person sought your advice on a matter regarding which you have knowledge. To confine this matter within yourself and then give him correct advice is amānat. A person is employed somewhere and does his work according to the conditions which were laid down. This is amānat. A person is employed for eight hours and he steals some of this time without permission, works lazily without any reason, arrives late to work or leaves before time – all this is against amānat.

The Qur'ān and Ḥadīth provide many details on these minute points. Those who are observant of their trusts have been given the glad tidings of success. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِأَمٰنٰتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رٰعُوْنَ

[Successful also are those] who are observant of their trusts and pledges.[1]

Stressing the need to fulfil trusts

The crux of the previously quoted verse is that any person who has a trust has to convey it to the one who is eligible for it. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* greatly stressed the conveying and fulfilling of trusts. Ḥaḍrat Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that rarely would Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* deliver a sermon without adding the following:

لا إيمان لمن لا أمانة له، ولا دين لمن لا عهد له

The one who has no trustworthiness has no īmān. The one who does not adhere to his covenants has no Dīn.[2]

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

آية المنافق ثلاث، إذا حدث كذب، وإذا وعد أخلف، وإذا اوتمن خان

There are three signs of a hypocrite: When he speaks, he lies. When he promises, he goes against his promise. When he is entrusted, he acts treacherously.

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[1] Sūrah al-Muʾminūn, 23: 8.
Tafsīrī Nukāt, vol. 1, p. 293.
[2] Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qurʾān*, vol. 2, p. 446.

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* explains khiyānat (treachery) as follows:

If there is a lawful due which you have to fulfil to another person, and you do not fulfil it as it ought to be fulfilled, then this is khiyānat. If a person has an item of another as a trust, and he misuses it or refuses to return it when asked, then this is khiyānat. A person knows the secret of another, or someone shared a secret with a person, conveying it to a third person will be khiyānat. Similarly, if you have a task to fulfil and you do not carry it out as you were supposed to, it will be called khiyānat. Not upholding the friendship of a friend is also khiyānat. If a wife is not loyal to her husband, it is khiyānat. To have something in the heart but utter something else, or do something to the contrary, is also khiyānat. Another meaning of khiyānat is to join a certain group and to then make efforts to cause damage to it. If you are relied upon to do a certain task and you do not do it, this is khiyānat.

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَخُوْنُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ وَتَخُوْنُوْٓا أَمٰنٰتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ

O believers! Do not betray Allāh and the Messenger, and do not wilfully betray your mutual trusts.[1]

Khiyānat is not restricted to the heart. It can be committed by every limb of the body – even by the indications and gestures of one's eyes and eyebrows. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

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[1] Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 27.

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْاَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُوْرُ

He knows the treachery of the eyes and whatever the chests conceal.[1]

Amānat means that Allāh's obedience is volitional

اِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْاَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَاَبَيْنَ اَنْ يَّحْمِلْنَهَا وَاَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْاِنْسَانُ اِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُوْمًا جَهُوْلًا. لِيُعَذِّبَ اللّٰهُ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقٰتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِيْنَ وَالْمُشْرِكٰتِ وَيَتُوْبَ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا.

We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to bear it and they were afraid of it. Man undertook to bear it; he is very merciless, immature. So that Allāh may punish the male hypocrites and the female hypocrites, and the male polytheists and the female polytheists; and Allāh may forgive the believing men and the believing women. Allāh is forgiving, merciful.[2]

Explanatory translation:

(In the beginning of the creation), We presented this trust (of Allāh's volitional obedience) to the heavens, earth and mountains but they refused to bear it and became fearful of it. (When it was presented before) man, he bore it. He was (in this matter) certainly merciless (to his self) and immature (in the sense that without thinking about the consequences, he undertook to bear it. In this way, he cast his own self

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[1] Sūrah al-Mu'min, 40, 19.
Tafsīrī Nukāt, vol. 1, p. 322.
[2] Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 72-73.

into misery because intellect and safety demanded that he too ought to have refused to bear it. We had the right to place or not to place this burden through Our absolute power. However, he ought to have excused himself there and then. Anyway, man undertook to bear this burden). Consequently, Allāh will now punish the male and female hypocrites and the male and female polytheists (and others like them who do not remain firm to their covenants and do not keep to their word). He will turn to the believing men and women (with mercy and forgive them their sins by virtue of their īmān). Allāh has always been most forgiving and most merciful (He is therefore prepared to forgive and show mercy to every such person who seeks His forgiveness and mercy – like the believing men and women, and the unbelievers who embrace īmān).[1]

In his *al-Muwāfaqāt Fī Uṣūl ash-Sharīʿah*, ʿAllāmah Abū Is-ḥāq ash-Shāṭibī *raḥimahullāh* provides a similar explanation to the above verse. He writes:

المقصد الشرعي من وضع الشريعة إخراج المكلف عن داعية هواه حتى يكون عبدا لله اختيارا كما هو عبد لله اضطرارا.[2]

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[1] Ḥadrat Maulānā Ḥabīb ar-Raḥmān Ṣāḥib Kīrānwī: *Ḥull al-Qur'ān*, vol. 3, p. 63.
This commentary of the Qur'ān was checked word-for-word and ratified by Ḥadrat Ḥakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *raḥimahullāh*. I included this commentary in the syllabus of Bayt al-Maʿārif, Allāhābād and undertook to teach it myself. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī)

[2] الموافقات في أصول الشريعة، ج ٢، ص ١٦٨.

The fundamental objective of formulating the Sharīʿat is to remove man from the demands of his desires so that he becomes a voluntary servant of Allāh just as every person was a non-voluntary servant before the descent of the Sharīʿat.

يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا تُوْبُوْآ اِلَى اللهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوْحًا، عَسٰى رَبُّكُمْ اَنْ يُّكَفِّرَ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ، يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهُ، نُوْرُهُمْ يَسْعٰى بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَبِاَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُوْرَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا، اِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ.

O believers! Turn to Allāh in repentance with a sincere repentance. It may well be that your Sustainer will expiate from you your evils and admit you into gardens beneath which rivers flow. The day when Allāh will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will run forward before them and to their right. They will say: O our Sustainer! Perfect our light for us and forgive us. Surely You can do everything.[1]

Explanatory translation:

O believers! Repent sincerely before Allāh *taʿālā* (there must be remorse in the heart over the sin, and a firm resolution not to commit it in the future. This includes all the obligations of Dīn because it is a sin to leave them out. It also includes all the prohibitions because it is a sin to commit them). It is hoped (i.e. it is promised) that your Sustainer will pardon you your sins (on account of this repentance) and admit you into gardens (of Paradise) beneath which rivers flow. (This will be on) the day when Allāh will not

[1] Sūrah at-Taḥrīm, 66: 8.

disgrace the Prophet (*sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) and the Muslims who are with him. Their light will run in front of them and to their right, and they will supplicate thus: O our Sustainer! Let this light remain until the end (let it not extinguish along the path) and forgive us. You have the power to do everything.

What is a sincere repentance?

قال محمد بن كعب القرظي: يجمعها أربعة أشياء: الاستغفار باللسان، والإقلاع بالأبدان، وإضمار ترك العود بالجنان، ومهاجرة سيء الإخوان.

Muhammad ibn Kaʿb al-Qurazī said: A sincere repentance comprises of four things: (1) seeking forgiveness verbally, (2) giving up the sin with the body parts immediately, (3) making a firm resolution with the heart not to repeat the sin, (4) keeping away from bad company.

How can the heart be illuminated when images of other creations are embedded in it? How can a person move towards Allāh *taʿālā* when he is still imprisoned by carnal desires? How can he desire entry into Allāh's lofty court when he has purified himself from the filth of his negligence? How can he expect to understand intricate mysteries when he hasn't desisted from his improper actions as yet?

Note: How can the heart ever be illuminated when it is inundated by the world and worldly things such as wealth, dignity, children, properties, thoughts, vain wishes and false hopes? Only when the darkness of these things are removed from the heart will light enter it. The heart which is chained by carnal desires

and is constantly thinking about the type of food it wants to eat, the clothing it wants to wear, the woman he wants to marry and the things he wants to purchase – then such a heart can never walk towards Allāh *taʿālā*. This is because the shackles of desires are attached to his feet. How, then, can such a person walk!?

If Allāh's quality of justice and equity was to manifest itself in this world, the smallest of sin will not be a minor sin. Rather, every sin will be a major one and will make one eligible for punishment. After all, he has transgressed against the most mighty and most powerful of all. He is also so magnanimous whose favours and bounties are countless. The slightest disobedience is so serious that it is enough to destroy a person. And if Allāh's grace manifested itself, the most serious sin will not be major. Rather, all will be minor. In fact, they will be as though they are non-existent and pardoned.[1]

Istighfār

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللهِ وَالْفَتْحُ. وَرَاَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُوْنَ فِيْ دِيْنِ اللهِ اَفْوَاجًا. فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ، اِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا.

When the help of Allāh comes, and victory. And you see people entering Allāh's religion in droves. Glorify the praises of your Lord, and seek His forgiveness. Surely He is most pardoning.[2]

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[1] *Maʿārif Sūfiyyah*, p. 373.
[2] Sūrah an-Nasr, 110: 1-3.

Explanatory translation

(O Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*)! When Allāh's help and the conquest (of Makkah together with its results) arrives and (one of the effects of this conquest is that) you see people entering Allāh's religion (Islam) in droves, then (you must conclude that the purpose of remaining in this world and the objective of your commissioning as a Prophet – the perfection of religion – have been realized. The journey to the Hereafter is near, so make preparations for it and) glorify and sing the praises of your Lord and ask Him for forgiveness. Surely He is most pardoning.

Glorification of Allāh and seeking His forgiveness must be increased at the approach of death

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ

Glorify the praises of your Lord and seek His forgiveness.

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* narrates that after the revelation of this sūrah, whenever Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* performed a salāh, he would make this supplication:

سُبْحَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَبِحَمْدِكَ اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ

O our Lord! Glory and praise be to You. O Allāh! Forgive me.[1]

Hadrat Umm Salamah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* narrates that after the revelation of this sūrah, Rasūlullāh

[1] Bukhārī.

sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam used to constantly make the following supplication:

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ وَاَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ

Glory and praise be to Allāh. I seek forgiveness from Allāh and I turn to Him in repentance.

He used to say: I have been ordered to do this." He would then read this sūrah as a proof.

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that after the revelation of this sūrah, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* exerted himself tremendously in worship to the extent that his feet used to swell. (Qurṭubī)[1]

Rasūlullāh is ordered to make istighfār

Allāh *taʿālā* clearly instructs the seeking of forgiveness:

فَاعْلَمْ اَنَّهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ، وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَاللهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوٰكُمْ.

Know, then, that none is worthy of worship but Allāh. Seek forgiveness for your sins and for the believing men and believing women. Allāh knows all your comings and goings and your resting place.[2]

Some scholars state that this verse is very hope-instilling for the Muslims because Allāh *taʿālā* orders His Messenger *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to seek forgiveness for the believing men and women. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* must have

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[1] Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qurʾān*, vol. 8, p. 837.
[2] Sūrah Muḥammad, 47: 19.

certainly carried out this order. If Allāh *taʿālā* Himself gave the order for this supplication to be made for the ummat, it cannot happen that He did not accept the supplication. The pardoning of the sins of the ummat is thus obvious. This in itself is an immense success. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: I seek forgiveness 100 times daily.

It is related in a Hadīth that whenever Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* spoke in any assembly or addressed any person, he would pause periodically and say:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الْغَفُوْرُ

O Allāh! Forgive me and accept my repentance. Surely You are the One who accepts repentance and the all-forgiving.

A Hadīth states:

أَفْضَلُ الذِّكْرِ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ وَأَفْضَلُ الدُّعَاءِ الْاِسْتِغْفَارُ

The most superior form of remembrance is Lā Ilāha Illallāh and the most superior supplication is seeking forgiveness.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِيْ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اِذَا أَحْسَنُوْا اِسْتَبْشَرُوْا وَاِذَا أَسَاؤُا اِسْتَغْفَرُوْا

O Allāh! Include me among those who are happy when they do good and seek forgiveness when they do wrong.[1]

[1] Maulānā Aḥmad Saʿīd Sāḥib: *Kashf ar-Raḥmān*, p. 812.

Dhikr

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاذْكُرُوْنِيْ اَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوْا لِيْ وَلَا تَكْفُرُوْنِ

Remember Me and I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and do not be ungrateful.[1]

Explanatory translation

Remember Me (as the Benefactor) for the previously-mentioned bounties and I will remember you (with kindness). Be grateful (for My favours) and do not be ungrateful (by denying My favours or being disobedient to Me).[2]

حدثنا محمد بن العلاء، حدثنا أبو أسامة عن بريد بن عبد الله، عن أبي بردة عن أبي موسى رضي الله عنه قال: قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: مثل الذي يذكر ربه والذي لا يذكر ربه مثل الحي والميت.

Hadrat Abū Mūsā radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: The similitude of the one who remembers Allāh and the one who does not is like that of the living and the dead. (The one who remembers Allāh is alive while the one who does not is dead).

This Hadīth compares the one who remembers Allāh *taʿālā* to the one who is living, and the one who is deprived of His remembrance to the one who is dead. ʿAllāmah Qastalānī *rahimahullāh* writes in this regard:

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 152.
[2] Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 391.

شبه الذاكر بالحي الذي يزين ظاهره بنور الحياة وإشراقها فيه، وبالتصرف التام فيما يريده، وباطنه بنور العلم والفهم والإدراك، كذلك الذاكر مزين ظاهره بنور العلم والطاعة، وباطنه بنور العلم والمعرفة، فقلبه مستقر في حظيرة القدس وسره في مخدع الوصل، وغير الذاكر عاطل ظاهره وباطل باطنه.[1]

The one who remembers Allāh taʿālā is compared to a living person in the sense that a living person beautifies his external life with the light of life and with total control over whatever he wants to do. Furthermore, his internal self is embellished with knowledge, understanding and perception. In the same way, the one who remembers Allāh taʿālā beautifies his external self with the light of knowledge and obedience, and his internal self with the light of knowledge and recognition. His heart thus grazes in sanctified grazing lands and persists in proximity. On the other hand, the one who does not remember Allāh is externally paralysed and internally depraved.

Imām Muslim *raḥimahullāh* relates this Ḥadīth from Shaykh Abū Kurayb Muḥammad ibn al-ʿAlā' who is a teacher of Imām Bukhārī *raḥimahullāh*. It contains the following words:

مثل البيت الذي يذكر الله فيه، والبيت الذي لا يذكر الله فيه مثل الحي والميت.

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[1] إرشاد الساري، ص ٤٠٤.

The house in which Allāh taʿālā is remembered and the one in which He is not remembered is like the living and the dead.[1]

Dhikr results in purification of the self and correction of character

Hadrat Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sāhib *rahimahullāh* quoted many Ahādīth on the virtues of dhikr. He concludes his discussion as follows:

The fact of the matter is that the superiority of every action differs with the effect it has. The remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* is undoubtedly most superior in embellishing the self, treating heedlessness and removing obstacles and veils. This, notwithstanding the fact that spending one's wealth in Allāh's cause and waging jihād are superior as regards their many rewards and in elevating the rank of a person.

Note: In other words, since Allāh's remembrance is related to embellishing the self, removing heedlessness and raising the veils – all of which are very important stations – Allāh's remembrance will be superior to all actions. (compiler)

Definition of dhikr

I was on the verge of completing *Hayāt al-Qulūb* when I came across *Majālis al-Abrār* of Shaykh Ahmad Rūmī *rahimahullāh* (d. 1043 A.H.). This book was highly recommended by Hadrat Maulānā Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* (d. 1239 A.H.). Subsequently it was translated under the auspices of Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Kifāyatullāh Dehlawī *rahimahullāh*. The first

[1] *Kashf al-Bārī*, vol. 13, p. 197.

discussion of this book is on the virtue and definition of dhikr. The Arabic text with its Urdu translation is quoted here. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept. Āmīn.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: مثل الذي يذكر ربه والذي لا يذكر ربه مثل الحي والميت. (البخاري، رقم ٦٤٠٧).

هذا الحديث من صحاح المصابيح رواه أبو موسى الأشعري رضي الله عنه فإنه صلى الله عليه وسلم جعل فيه الذاكر مثل الحي مع كونه حيا لأن المراد بالحي من له حياة حقيقية أبدية، وهي إنما تحصل بذكر الله تعالى لأن الذكر يحيي قلوب الذاكرين ويوجب لهم الاستعداد لمعرفة رب العالمين، والوصول إلى الحياة الأبدية في دار النعيم، ومن كان خاليا عن الذكر فهو بمنزلة الميت لكونه خاليا عما يحيي قلبه وعما يوجب له المعرفة والحياة الأبدية، لأن شرف الإنسان وفضيلته التي بها فإن جميع أصناف الخلق ليس إلا باستعداده لا بجارحة من جوارحه، بل الجوارح له اتباع وخدم يستخدمها استخدام الملك للرعايا ويستعملها استعمال السيد للعبيد.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: The similitude of the one who remembers Allāh and the one who does not is like that of the living and the dead.

This Hadīth is related by Hadrat Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī radiyallāhu ʿanhu. In it, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam compares the one who remembers Allāh taʿālā to the one who is living even though he himself is alive. This is because the living person in this context refers to the one who enjoys real and eternal

life. This can only be acquired through Allāh's remembrance because it gives life to the hearts of those who remember Him and provides them with the ability to recognize Allāh taʿālā and eligible for the eternal life of Paradise. As for the one who is devoid of dhikr, he is like a dead person because he does not have the ingredient which gives life to his heart and enables him to recognize Allāh taʿālā and enjoy the life of eternity. This is because man's nobility and superiority over the other creations lies solely in his innate capability of recognizing Allāh taʿālā. The capability for this recognition is solely with the heart, not with any of the other body parts. In fact, all body parts are subservient to the heart and its attendants whose service it utilizes just as a king utilizes the service of his subjects, and a master of his slave.

وهو إنما يطمئن بذكر الله تعالى كما قال الله تعالى: "ألا بذكر الله تطمئن القلوب." وأفضل الذكر على ما ورد في الحديث "لا إله إلا الله". فلا بد للعبد المكلف أن يشتغل بهذا الذكر حتى يطمئن قلبه ويستعد لمعرفة الله تعالى. لكن قبل اشتغاله به يجب عليه أن يحصل من علم الكلام ما يصح به اعتقاده على مذهب أهل السنة والجماعة وما يحترز به عن شبه المبتدعة، لأن القلب ما دام مكدرا بظلمة البدعة الإعتقادية لا ينور أنوار الطاعات.[1]

The heart acquires tranquillity only from Allāh's remembrance. Allāh taʿālā says in this regard: "Listen! It is in the remembrance of Allāh that the hearts experience tranquillity." The most superior form of

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[1] الترمذي، رقم: ٣٣٨٣. مجالس الأبرار، ١٥.

dhikr as stated in a Hadīth is Lā Ilāha Illallāh. It is therefore necessary for every normal adult to occupy himself in this dhikr so that his heart experiences tranquillity and acquires the capability for Allāh-recognition. However, before he can get occupied in this, it is obligatory on him to acquire so much knowledge of beliefs whereby his beliefs are in line with those of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah, and through which he can save himself from the doubts and misgivings of the innovators in Dīn. As long as the heart is turbid with the darkness of creedal innovations, the light of devotions cannot shine in it.

Knowledge of rules and regulations is also necessary

It is obligatory on the person to learn so much of jurisprudence through which his actions are correct and valid in line with the Sharīʿat. If this is not the case, then without strengthening his roots and straightening the path, it would be Satanic hastiness and a carnal desire to undertake to do major works. This will result in his humiliation in this world and the Hereafter. An ignoramus of this kind will sometimes fall into deception, and – in his immaturity – consider carnal thoughts and Satanic misgivings to be karāmāt (supernatural feats), whereas they are really deceptions which cause various types of misguidance on the path of the truth.[1]

[1] *Majālis al-Abrār.*

Necessary actions for the illumination of the heart

وكان يقول (أي الإمام الشافعي) من أحب أن يفتح الله تعالى عليه بنور القلب فعليه بالخلوة وقلة الأكل، وترك مخالطة السفهاء، وبعض أهل العلم الذين لا يريدون بعلمهم إلا الدنيا.[1]

Imām Shāfiʿī raḥimahullāh used to say: The one who would like Allāh taʿālā to open the light of the heart to him must resort to seclusion, eating less, abstaining from interaction with foolish people, and abstaining from the company of those 'ulamā' who desire only the world through their knowledge.

Adhering to dhikr for purification of the self

فإن قلت وبما أزكي نفسي؟ قلت: بلزوم الذكر. قال تعالى: أنا عند ظن عبدي بي، وأنا معه حين ذكرني. فعلى حسب الذكر يكون تطهير النفس وتزكيتها. "قد أفلح من تزكى وذكر اسم ربه فصلى." وعلى حسب التزكية يكون شهود المعية.

If you ask me: "How can I purify my self?" I will reply: "By adhering to Allāh's remembrance." Allāh taʿālā says: "I treat My servant according to his expectations of Me. And I am with him when he remembers Me." Thus, purification and cleansing of the self will be according to the nature of dhikr. Allāh taʿālā says in the Qur'ān: "Successful indeed is the one who purified himself, remembered the name of his Lord, and performed ṣalāh." Togetherness with Allāh taʿālā is experienced according to the level of purification.

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[1] الطبقات، ٤٤.

Allāh *taʿālā* says in Sūrah al-Jumuʿah:

وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ

Remember Allāh abundantly so that you are successful.

This proves the virtue of abundant dhikr. On the other hand, Allāh *taʿālā* also castigates those who remember Him little. He says with reference to the hypocrites:

لَا يَذْكُرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا

They do not remember Allāh but little.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* prohibited us from abundant remembrance of all apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. A Ḥadīth states:

بلغه أن عيسى بن مريم كان يقول: لا تكثروا الكلام بغير ذكر الله، فتقسوا قلوبكم، فإن القلب القاسي بعيد من الله ولكن لا تعلمون.

Ḥaḍrat ʿĪsā ʿalayhis salām used to say: Do not speak excessively except for Allāh's remembrance. If not, your hearts will become hard, and a hard heart is far from Allāh but you do not know it (because this is a metaphysical thing).[1]

Ḥikmat

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوْتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ؕ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ.

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[1] *Ta'līfāt Muslihul Ummat*: vol. 5, p. 69.

He grants understanding of Dīn to whomever He wills. And whoever has been granted understanding of Dīn has received immense good. It is only those who have intelligence that accept advice.[1]

Maulānā Ḥamīd ad-Dīn Farāhī *raḥimahullāh* explains the word ḥikmat in his book *Mufradāt*. The necessary portion of his explanation is quoted here:

Ḥikmat refers to that power and ability through which man makes decisions in accordance with the truth in his matters and affairs. Allāh *taʿālā* praises Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd *ʿalayhis salām* as follows:

وَاٰتَيْنَاهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصْلَ الْخِطَابِ

We gave him wisdom and the ability to pass decisions on matters.

In the above verse, the words *faṣl al-khiṭāb* refer to the fruits of wisdom. Just as wisdom is the fruit of the ability to pass decisions, pure character and culture are also the fruits of wisdom. This is why the Arabs apply the word ḥikmat to human strength and ability which combines firmness of intellect and nobility of character. Thus, an intelligent and cultured person is referred to as a ḥakīm (a wise man). A point which is absolutely clear according to the intellect and the heart is referred to as ḥikmat.[2]

We now quote an article on ḥikmat by Muftī Muḥammad Salmān Ṣāḥib Manṣūrpūrī from the periodical *Nidā'-e-Shāhī Murādābād*:

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 269.
[2] *Tadabbur Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 297.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوْتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ.

He grants understanding of Dīn to whomever He wills. And whoever has been granted understanding of Dīn has received immense good. It is only those who have intelligence that accept advice.[1]

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* – the leader of the exegists of the Qur'ān – said that in this verse, the word hikmat means "to understand the meaning of the Qur'ān". Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* said: "This point comes to my heart that hikmat in this verse means to acquire an "understanding of Allāh's Dīn". This refers to those meanings which Allāh *taʿālā* places in the hearts of people. [2]

The fact of the matter is that hikmat refers to every type of intelligence, juridical acumen, and religious insight. There can be no one more fortunate than the one who receives this Allāh-bestowed bounty. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

من يرد الله به خيرا يفقهه في الدين.[٣]

When Allāh wills good for a person He confers him with understanding of Dīn.

Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said:

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 269.

[2] *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, p. 213, Dār as-Salām, Riyadh.

[3] صحيح البخاري: ج ١، ص ١٦.

> Understanding of Dīn is most beneficial because beliefs are set right through it and inspiration to do good deeds is received. Beliefs and good deeds result in salvation and reward in the Hereafter. Nothing of this world can equal reward and salvation.[1]

After speaking about charity and charitable works, Allāh *taʿālā* speaks about hikmat. It seems that the link between the two is that the person who has understanding of Dīn spends happily and with an open-heart in good works. Shaytān cannot overpower him into thoughts of miserliness. As for the one who is deprived of this understanding of Dīn, he is easily trapped by Shaytān.

Accepting advice from others is a sign of great intelligence. This is why the verse concludes with this announcement that intelligent people accept good words of advice, and endeavour to practise on the advice. On the other hand, those who are deprived of intelligence neither accept advice and good counsel happily nor do they practise on it. Instead, they remain intoxicated in their crooked ways and desires.[2]

The one inviting to Allāh must do it with hikmat

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اُدْعُ إِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

[1] *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 162.
[2] *Nidā'-e-Shāhī*, November 2015, p. 5.

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and with kind admonition. And argue with them in a way that is best.[1]

In his commentary to the above verse, ʿAllāmah Nasafī *rahimahullāh* writes in *al-Iklīl ʿAlā Madārik at-Tanzīl*:

(اُدْعُ إِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ) أي الإسلام (بِالْحِكْمَةِ) بالمقالة الصحيحة المحكمة وهو الدليل الموضح اللحق المزيل للشبهة (وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ) وهي التي لا يخفى عليهم أنك نتاصحهم بها وتفصل ما ينفعهم فيها أو بالقرآن أي ادعوهم بالكتاب الذي هو حكمة وموعظة حسنة والحكمة المعرفة بمراتب الأفعال والموعظة الحسنة أن يخلط الرغبة بالرهبة والإنذار بالبشارة (وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ أَحْسَنُ) بالطريقة التي هي أحسن طرق المجادلة من الرفق واللين من غير فظاظة أو بما يوقظ القلوب ويعظ النفوس ويجلو العقول وهو رد على من يأبى المناظرة في الدين.[2]

(Invite to the way of your Sustainer) to Islam (with wisdom). In other words, with correct and cogent statements. It is an evidence which expounds the truth and removes doubts. (and with kind admonition). A sound admonition is that which is fully explained to people and it does not remain concealed from them that you are desiring their wellbeing through enjoining good, and that your objective is to convey benefit and goodness to them.

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[1] Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.

[2] تفسير المدارك، ج ٣، ص ٦٨.

In other words, people must realize that you are doing it for their own good. Alternatively, kind admonition could refer to inviting people through the Qur'ān. That is, through this Book which is an embodiment of wisdom and sound admonishment. Wisdom entails having knowledge of the levels of actions. Sound admonishment combines encouragement with warning, and instilling fear with glad tidings. In other words, both opposites are resorted to. (And argue with them in a way that is best). In other words, the argument must be in the best way possible. It must be kind and soft; not harsh. Or, it must be such that it awakens sleeping hearts and illuminates the intellects. This explanation refutes those who reject debating.[1]

Teaching hikmat is one of the responsibilities of prophet-hood

هُوَ الَّذِيْ بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيّٖنَ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ، وَإِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِيْ ضَلَالٍ مُّبِيْنٍ.

It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. And before this they were lying in manifest error.[2]

Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* writes in reference to the above verse. The definition of hikmat as given by Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid

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[1] As quoted from *al-Kalām al-Balīgh Fī Ahkām at-Tablīgh*, p. 80.
[2] Sūrah al-Jumuʿah, 62: 2.
Maʿīyyat-e-Ilāhī, p. 33.

Sulaymān Nadwī *raḥimahullāh* is included in this discussion.

In the above verse, Allāh *taʿālā* speaks about Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the duties and responsibilities that go with the mantle of prophet-hood. These are the four departments of prophet-hood which Allāh *taʿālā* gave to His deputies and representatives. This is a four-pronged responsibility.

1. Recitation of the Qur'ān

The first responsibility and the first department is that of reciting the verses. Reciting the verses of the Qur'ān to the people. This is such an important factor and such a noble duty that Allāh *taʿālā* mentions it first among the departments of prophet-hood. Another verse reads thus:

يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ

Reciting to them His verses and teaching them the Book.

Teaching of the Book and wisdom have been mentioned first. This is in accordance with the context and theme. This is the field of those who have deep insight – they will tell us why it is mentioned first in this context while it is mentioned last in another context. They will tell us the circumstance of the verse and the central theme of the chapter. This is something for them. Teaching of the Book entails Islamic sciences. It entails teaching the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and tafsīr.

2. Purification of the self

The second responsibility is that of purification of the self. This removes base qualities – it removes

jealousy, it removes severity, it removes love for this world and love of fame. Instead of all this, it embeds love for Allāh *taʿālā*, love for the Hereafter and desire for Paradise in the hearts. The word يزكيهم means nurturing of the self, culturing of the self, removal of base qualities, creation of virtuous qualities, and creating that attribute which is mentioned at another place in the Qur'ān:

وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الإِيْمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ, وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوْقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ, أُولٰئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُوْنَ.

However, Allāh placed the love of īmān in your hearts and beautified it in your hearts, and placed the repugnance of unbelief, sinning and disobedience in your hearts. It is such who are on the path of virtue.[1]

The purpose behind the revelation of the Qur'ān is not confined to its preservation in the form of letters and words in books, thereafter in the hearts of people, so that people may be able to recite it, listen to it, memorize it, and continue reciting it. Rather, a very important purpose of the Qur'ān is the reformation of beliefs and the reformation of the hearts and selves. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* accomplished both these duties. The Saḥābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* were a living testimony to this endeavour of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Teaching the Book

The third and fourth responsibilities are teaching the Book and wisdom. The word حكمة refers to virtuous morals and habits. Our teacher and the erudite

[1] Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt, verse 7.

scholar of his time, ʿAllāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* is of the opinion that wherever the word حكمة is mentioned in the Qur'ān, it refers to أخلاق – morals. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ

We bestowed wisdom to Luqmān.

After this verse, there is an entire list of morals and noble characteristics and habits. Allāh *taʿālā* first used the word حكمة and then enumerated the different forms of this حكمة – all of which are connected to morals. In Sūrah al-Isrā', Allāh *taʿālā* enumerates an entire list of morals. After enumerating them, He says:

ذلِكَ مِمَّآ أَوْحى إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ

All this is part of the wisdom which your Sustainer revealed to you.[1]

After mentioning virtuous character and morals, Allāh *taʿālā* uses the word حكمة . From this we learn that the word حكمة refers to morals – good morals and virtuous character.[2]

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[1] Sūrah al-Isrā', 17: 39.
[2] *Ifādāt Qur'ānī.*

Basīrat

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قُلْ هٰذِهٖ سَبِيْلِيْٓ اَدْعُوْٓا اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۗ عَلٰى بَصِيْرَةٍ اَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِيْ ۭ وَسُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ وَمَآ اَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ.

Say: This is my path. I invite towards Allāh with insight, I and whoever is with me. Allāh is pure. And I am not of those who ascribe partners.[1]

In his commentary to the above verse, ʿAllāmah Qushayrī *rahimahullāh* explains the word basīrat as follows:

(البصيرة) اليقين الذي لا مرية فيه، والبيان الذي لا شك فيه، البصيرة يكون صاحبها ملاطفا بالتوفيق جهرا ومكاشفا بالتحقيق سرا.[2]

Basīrat refers to conviction of a level which permits no doubt whatsoever, and a speech which is devoid of doubt. A man of basīrat observes a path of agreement and reconciliation externally, and seeks to fathom the reality in privacy.

It is said (basīrat) is when the sun of recognition rises, when a person acquires recognition, the stars of intelligence spread through him and he realizes full recognition.

Imām Fakhr ad-Dīn Rāzī *rahimahullāh* writes in *at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*:

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[1] Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 108.

[2] تفسير قشيري، ج ٣، ص ٢١٨.

قال صاحب الكشاف البصر نور العين وهو ما يبصر به الرائي ويدرك المرئيات كما أن البصيرة نور القلب وهو ما يستبصر به ويتأمل، فكلاهما جوهران لطيفان خلق الله تعالى فيهما آلتين للإبصاروالاستبصار، أقول إن أصحابه من المعتزلة لا يرضون منه بهذا الكلام وتحقيق القول في الأبصار يستدعي أبحاثا غامضة لا تليق بهذا الموضع.[1]

ʿAllāmah Zamakhsharī raḥimahullāh states in al-Kashshāf: Baṣar actually refers to light of the eyes through which the one looking sees at the things which are looked at and "captures" the things which are seen to him. On the other hand, baṣīrat is a light of the heart through which a person ponders and reflects. Thus, both [the eyes and the heart] are two elements for which Allāh taʿālā created two instruments, i.e. the eyes and the heart through which a person looks and thinks. However, I think that ʿAllāmah Zamakhsharī's Muʿtazilī friends do not accept this point. The word abṣār requires very deep investigations, but this is not the place for that.

Tafsīr Maẓharī states:

The statement: "I invite towards Allāh" is an explanation of the words "This is my path". It calls towards purity from every inappropriate quality and seeking proximity to Allāh *taʿālā*. The words *ʿalā baṣīratin* mean "with conviction and full recognition". In other words, I am not from among those who believe in self-concocted ideas regarding which they

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[1] التفسير الكبير للإمام خفر الدين الرازي، ج ٢، ص ٢٩٦.

themselves have no knowledge of. The word basīrat could also refer to a clear and explicit proof. The words "and whoever is with me" refer to those who believe in me and affirm me. They too invite towards Allāh *taʿālā*.

Kalbī and Ibn Zayd said that it is essential for those who follow Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to invite to the path which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* invited, and to continue reminding through the Qur'ān.

Another meaning could be: I and those who follow me are on basīrat.

Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said "and whoever is with me" refers to the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*. They were on the path of guidance, the mines of knowledge, the treasure houses of īmān and Allāh's army.

Hadrat Ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said that those who want to tread the Sunnat must tread the path of true men, i.e. the path of the Sahābah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The group of Sahābah was the most spiritually pure group of this ummat whose knowledge was very deep and in whom there were no formalities. Allāh *taʿālā* selected them for the companionship of His Prophet *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the propagation of His Dīn. They remained firm on the straight path. You people should follow their character and way of life, and develop similarity with them.

"Allāh is pure" – in other words, I invite towards Allāh *taʿālā* and acknowledge and accept that He is pure from partners.[1]

Istiqāmat

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ

Remain firm as you have been ordered.

Abū ʿAlī Jūzjānī *raḥimahullāh* said: Seek steadfastness and do not look for supernatural feats (karāmat). Your self is certainly desirous of supernatural feats while Allāh *taʿālā* demands steadfastness from you.

The above statement of Abū ʿAlī Jūzjānī *raḥimahullāh* is most important in this chapter. Many Sufis and those treading the Sufi way are unaware of the reality of this.

The reason why their selves are desirous of supernatural feats is that when they heard about the incidents of the pious predecessors and focussed on their supernatural feats, their selves felt that they too should acquire these. Some of them could not realize this, so they became dejected. However, had they fathomed its reality, this difficulty would have been solved for them and it would have become easy for them. Allāh *taʿālā* opens the door of karāmat and istiqāmat for some of His servants. The wisdom behind this is that it results in a very strong and powerful abhorrence towards the world within them. Furthermore, abstaining from the desires of the self develops very firmly within them.

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[1] *Tafsīr Maẓharī*, vol. 8, p. 218.

Some servants develop this exposition after the acquisition of conviction. The veils of strangeness and foreignness are removed from their hearts. Consequently, they become totally independent of karāmat. They are convinced that the purpose of karāmat is the realization of conviction which they already have. Divine wisdom therefore does not condone karāmat for such people. After all, they are not in need of it. Karāmat is needed by a person who is desirous of it.

The one who has acquired conviction has a more complete and perfect capability. Consequently, he has no need for karāmat and kashf (exposition) as compared to the one who is desirous of it.

The desire for karāmat and kashf results in a misery, viz. pride and haughtiness. As for the one who has acquired conviction, he is protected against pride and haughtiness. After acquiring total conviction, he has no need for any observation or visual proof.[1]

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* writes on the subject of istiqāmat:

The literal meaning of istiqāmat is to remain straight or to walk straight. It means that a person must remain firm on what he considers to be the truth. Whether he encounters difficulties, opposition, mockery or every type of danger – he remains firm on the truth and continues firmly on that path.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is commanded thus:

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[1] *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif*, p. 37 – translated by Maulānā Kamāl al-Hudā Allāhābādī.

اِنَّمَا اِلٰهُكُمْ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ، فَاسْتَقِيْمُوْا اِلَيْهِ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوْهُ

Your worship is to be to one Allāh [alone]. Remain, then, upright to Him [alone] and seek His forgiveness.[1]

Another point is that of steadfastness in actions. This is known as mudāwamat. In other words, the good work or action which is decided upon must be carried out continuously until death. It must be done always and under all conditions. It must not be done sometimes and left out at other times because it would demonstrate weakness of the temperament and the heart's disregard for that action. Salāh is the best of all good actions. Yet, Allāh *taʿālā* speaks in praise of those who are steadfast in its performance. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِلَّا الْمُصَلِّيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَلٰى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُوْنَ

Except those who are observant of salāh, who remain constant in their salāh.[2]

Constancy in character is a great gem in the field of ethics. It comes from constancy in action. This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* instructed its adoption time and again. Someone asked Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* which good act was most beloved to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. She replied the good act which was done with constancy and steadfastness. (Bukhārī)

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* himself said that the best action in the sight of Allāh *taʿālā* is the one which is done with constancy. (Bukhārī)[1]

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[1] Sūrah Hā Mīm Sajdah, 41: 6.
[2] Sūrah al-Maʿārij, 70: 22-23.

Firāsat

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِيْنَ

Surely in this (in the destruction of Lūṯ's people] are signs for those who deliberate.[2]

Allāh *taʿālā* confers firāsat to His special servants.

عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: اتقوا فراسة المؤمن فإنه ينظر بنور الله. ثم قرأ: اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِيْنَ.

Ḥaḍrat Abū Saʿīd Khudrī raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: "Fear the firāsat (insightfulness) of a believer because he looks with Allāh's light." Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam then read the above verse.

وقد روي عن بعض أهل العلم في تفسير هذه الآية اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِيْنَ – قال: للمتفرسين.[3]

Some scholars explain the word mutawassimīn in the above verse as mutafarrisīn (people of insightfulness).

Firāsat refers to wisdom, sharpness of mind, intelligence, perception, the ability to understand and to fathom the depths of a matter. The ability to unravel something which is concealed through one's

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[1] Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī: *Tafsīrī Nukāt*, vol. 1, p. 300.

[2] Sūrah al-Ḥijr, 15: 75.

[3] سنن الترمذي، رقم ٣١٢٧، ج ٢، ص ١٤٥.

firāsat and intelligence is found in every person. It is not the reserve of a believer. The above-quoted verse also makes reference to people in general. That is, there are many signs for insightful people from the story of the people of Lūṯ *ʿalayhis salām*. The above-quoted Ḥadīth makes reference to a complete believer, while the address is to believers in general.

After this, it ought to be known that the borders of firāsat and karāmat are joined to each other, and that the karāmāt of the auliyā' are true. This is proven from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Thus, there can be no astonishment at the theme of this Ḥadīth. The meaning of "fear" in this Ḥadīth is to accept. A person sometimes does something which is inappropriate and feels that no one will come to know of it. However, when he goes to a certain pious person, the latter apprehends this action of the person.

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Saʿīd Aḥmad Ṣāḥib Pālanpūrī *dāmat barakātuhum* says that there are many incidents in the lives of the pious predecessors in which we see them perceiving certain things which people consider them to be their karāmat whereas they emanated from them on the basis of their īmānī firāsat. This is because a perfect believer does not have natural intelligence alone. Rather, he has the effulgence of īmān as well. His gaze is therefore a gaze of anger.[1]

The ʿulamā' laid down the condition of abstaining from evil glances for the acquisition of the above-mentioned light and effulgence. When a person does not abstain from evil glances, his carnal self takes a breath within his heart which then extinguishes that light. Allāh *taʿālā* says: "The one to whom Allāh does

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[1] *Tuḥfah al-Almaʿī Sharḥ Tirmidhī*, vol. 7, p. 310.

not confer light, there can be no other light for him." Allāh *taʿālā* recompenses His servants in accordance with their actions. Therefore, when a person continually saves himself from evil glances, Allāh *taʿālā* creates the light of baṣīrat for him.

Ḥaḍrat ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Ḥaḍrat Anas ibn Mālik *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* came to him on one occasion while having passed through the market. His eyes had fallen on a woman. When Ḥaḍrat ʿUthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* looked at him, he said: "Such people have come to me while the effects of adultery are noticeable in their eyes." Ḥaḍrat Anas *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Does divine revelation come down even after the departure of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*!?" Ḥaḍrat ʿUthmān *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* replied: "No. Rather, this evidence is from internal light and truthfulness."

Many incidents of this nature are reported from the lives of the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* and the Tābiʿīn.

The story of Khwājah ʿAbd al-Khāliq Gajdawānī

It was the day of 'Āshūrā'. Many people were present before him. The discussion revolved around Allāh-recognition and the reality. A youngster who looked like an ascetic entered. A garment of the Sufis (khirqah) was placed under his arm, and a prayer-mat (muṣallā) on his head. He came in and sat in one corner. Khwājah Ṣāḥib looked at him once. After some time, the youngster stood up and said: "O Khwājah! Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

اتقوا فراسة المؤمن فإنه ينظر بنور الله

Fear the firāsat (insightfulness) of a believer because he looks with Allāh's light.

Tell me, what is the wisdom behind this?"

Khwājah Sāḥib *raḥimahullāh* said: "The wisdom behind this is that you must cut off the *zunnār*,[1] throw it away and embrace īmān."

The youngster said: "I seek refuge in Allāh! How can I have a *zunnār*!?"

Khwājah Sāḥib indicated to his attendant to go to the youngster and remove the *khirqah*. When the *khirqah* was removed, a *zunnār* was found beneath it. The youngster cut it off immediately, threw it away and embraced īmān.

The shaykh then addressed his murīds and said: "This was an external physical *zunnār*. Now you remove the spiritual *zunnār*, cast it aside and make a new covenant with Allāh *taʿālā*." They all renewed their pledge to the shaykh.[2]

The causes of acquiring genuine firāsat

The pious predecessors said that the firāsat of a person who followed the Sunnat externally, immersed his internal self with perpetual meditation, restrained his gaze from unlawful things, kept his self away from doubts and misgivings, and consumed lawful sustenance can never err.

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to follow these causes. Āmīn. (compiler)

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[1] A string worn around the wrist by Hindus.
[2] *Mashā'ikh Naqshbandīyyah Mujaddidīyyah*, p. 74.

Inābat

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَاَنِيْبُوْٓا اِلٰى رَبِّكُمْ وَاَسْلِمُوْا لَهٗ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنْصَرُوْنَ.

Turn towards your Lord and submit before Him before the punishment comes upon you, then no one will come to your assistance.[1]

The reality of inābat and turning to Allāh *taʿālā* is that a person remains aloof from disobedience and sin, and turns himself towards Allāh's obedience and worship. There has to be remorse and regret over past actions, seeking pardon in Allāh's court, and to make a promise to abstain from those evils in the future. The words of the Sayyid al-Istighfār (the chief form of seeking forgiveness) are mentioned in the Hadīth as follows:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَنْتَ رَبِّيْ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ، خَلَقْتَنِيْ وَاَنَا عَبْدُكَ، وَاَنَا عَلٰى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ، اَبُوْءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ وَاَبُوْءُ بِذَنْبِيْ، فَاغْفِرْ لِيْ فَاِنَّهٗ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ.

The point which becomes clear from the above words is that the collective reality of repentance and seeking forgiveness is that while a servant believes in the divinity, oneness and creatorship of Allāh *taʿālā*, and acknowledges his own servitude, he makes a firm resolution to fulfil his promise and covenant with Allāh *taʿālā* to the best of his ability, thinks about his sins, about the countless bounties and favours of

[1] Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 54.

Allāh *taʿālā*, and his own shortcomings in comparison to those favours.

If a person is able to perceive this, it will result in remorse and regret which will then prompt him to seek pardon and to promise that he will not commit acts of disobedience in the future. In reality, all these conditions and feelings are collectively known as inābat and turning to Allāh *taʿālā*. Inābat of this nature conveys the glad tiding of Allāh's mercy and forgiveness, and removes thoughts of despondency from the heart and mind.[1]

Ikhbāt

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَإِلٰهُكُمْ إِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوْا ط وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِيْنَ

Your Allāh is one Allāh. Submit, then, to Him alone. And give glad tidings to those who are humble.[2]

The word khabt in Arabic refers to a low-lying tract of land. A khabīt is a person who considers himself to be insignificant. This is why Hadrat Qatādah *rahimahullāh* and Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* translate the word mukhbitīn as mutawādiʿīn (those who are humble). ʿAmr ibn Aus *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* says that the mukhbitīn are those who do not commit any act of oppression, and if anyone wrongs them, they do not exact revenge. Sufyān *rahimahullāh* said that they are the ones who are happy with Allāh's decree

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[1] Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 7, p. 104.
[2] Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 34.

in every situation and condition – comfort and discomfort, prosperity and adversity.[1]

We now quote the explanation of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad Is-ḥāq Khān from his tafsīr *ʿUmdah al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*:

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللهِ عَلٰى مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِّنْ بَهِيْمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ ط فَإِلٰهُكُمْ إِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ فَلَهٗ أَسْلِمُوْا ط وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِيْنَ.

For every nation have We appointed a sacrifice so that they may remember the name of Allāh over the slaughter of the cattle which He gave them. Your Allāh is one Allāh. Submit, then, to Him alone. And give glad tidings to those who are humble.[2]

An order is given to convey glad tidings to those who are humble. The only truly successful people are those who – due to their īmān and conviction – humble themselves sincerely and devotedly before their Creator and Master. The word ikhbāt refers to humbleness, humility and being "down to earth". This ought to be the hallmark of a servant. This is what his servitude demands – that is, he must remain submissive before his Creator and Master who brought him into existence and in whose bounties, favours and mercies he is immersed. In this alone lies his greatness, loftiness and success. A believing servant displays his humbleness and submission by bowing and prostrating before Allāh *taʿālā*. The one who is deprived of the quality of ikhbāt is deprived of every good. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

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[1] Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 268.
[2] Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 34.

The fundamental spirit of Islam is humbleness and submission. In other words, a person must not submit himself externally alone. Rather, his heart must submit before Allāh *taʿālā*. Those who have this quality in them are the true believers and genuine Muslims, and it is for them that the glad tidings of Allāh's pleasure is conveyed. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with this quality solely out of His grace, kindness and mercy. Āmīn.

The first and important quality of the mukhbitīn is fear of Allāh *taʿālā*. It is said in reference to such people that when Allāh's name is mentioned before them and His verses are recited to them, their hearts tremble out of Allāh's fear, out of the greatness of their Creator and Master, after thinking about the rights which they owe to Him, and over their thinking that they will have to present themselves before Him and give an account of their entire lives' doings.

This is the first quality of the mukhbitīn. Once they tremble out of His fear, they turn to Him with their heart and soul. The quality of fear for Allāh *taʿālā* is a most important and revolutionizing quality through which man's life takes a full turn, he becomes a pure human, is able to reach the greatest heights, and becomes eligible for Allāh's special mercy and attention.[1]

Sakīnah

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِذْ يَقُوْلُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لاَ تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللهَ مَعَنَا ج فَأَنْزَلَ اللهُ سَكِيْنَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُوْدٍ لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا

[1] *ʿUmdah al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. 4, p. 305.

…and he was saying to his companion: "Do not grieve, surely Allāh is with us." Allāh then sent down His assurance to him and helped him with forces which you did not see…[1]

Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* says that the word *sakīnah* means *ṭuma'nīnah* – tranquillity. Shaykh al-Islam Harawī *raḥimahullāh* says that *sakīnah* is a special condition and feeling which combines three things: (1) light, (2) strength, (3) soul.

The heart is illuminated through light. The proofs of īmān and the realities of conviction are exposed through it, and the difference between truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance, doubt and conviction becomes clear.

Strength creates determination and resoluteness in the heart. It experiences special energy at the time of obedience and worship to Allāh *taʿālā*. It is through this strength that the heart of a believer is able to overpower and defeat the invitations and demands of the carnal self.

The soul creates life in the heart on account of which the heart is awakened from the dream of heedlessness and becomes enthusiastic and vigorous in the path of Allāh *taʿālā*.[2]

It is related in *Saḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Saḥīḥ Muslim* that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was reading the following couplets of Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Rawāḥah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* on the occasion of the Battle of Khandaq:

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 40.
[2] Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 3, p. 447.

اللّٰهُمَّ لو لا أنت ما اهتدينا – ولا تصدقنا ولا صلينا

فأنزلن سكينة علينا – وثبت الأقدام إن لاقينا

إن الأولى قد بغوا علينا – وإن أرادوا فتنة أبينا

O Allāh! Had it not been for Your inspiration, we would not be guided. Neither would we have given in charity nor performed salāh. Kindly send down Your special tranquillity to us, and keep us firm when we meet the enemy. The first people certainly transgressed against us. If they intend to spread unbelief and polytheism, we will refuse.[1]

Qunūt

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمٰتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَالْقٰنِتِيْنَ وَالْقٰنِتٰتِ وَالصّٰدِقِيْنَ وَالصّٰدِقٰتِ وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ وَالصّٰبِرٰتِ وَالْخٰشِعِيْنَ وَالْخٰشِعٰتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِيْنَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقٰتِ وَالصَّائِمِيْنَ وَالصّٰئِمٰتِ وَالْحٰفِظِيْنَ فُرُوْجَهُمْ وَالْحٰفِظٰتِ وَالذّٰكِرِيْنَ اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا وَّالذّٰكِرٰتِ، اَعَدَّ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةً وَّاَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا.

Surely the Muslim men and the Muslim women, the believing men and the believing women, the truly devout men and the truly devout women, the truthful men and the truthful women, the patiently enduring men and the patiently enduring women, the humble men and the humble women, the charity-giving men and the charity-giving women, the fasting men and the fasting women, the men who guard their chastity and

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[1] *Madārij as-Sālikīn*, vol. 2, p. 504.

the women who guard [their chastity], the men who remember Allāh abundantly and the women who remember [Allāh abundantly] – Allāh has set aside for them forgiveness and a great reward.[1]

وَالْقٰنِتِيْنَ وَالْقٰنِتٰتِ - men and women who are firm and steadfast in their obedience to Allāh *taʿālā*. The word *qunūt* means to be firm and steadfast on worship and obedience. The original meaning of this word is to adhere and be constant. The level of qunūt is after īmān. After the joining of īmān and Islam, the condition of qunūt is born in a person's words and actions.[2]

Hadrat Maulānā Sūfī ʿAbd al-Hamīd Suwātī writes in *Maʿālim al-ʿIrfān* on the subject of qunūt as follows:

The third group among the righteous are the *qānitīn*. This word is derived from *qunūt* which means to adopt obedience. It refers to people who do not cast aside obedience to Allāh *taʿālā* under any condition and situation. When they enjoy prosperity, they are thankful to Allāh *taʿālā*. When they suffer adversity, they remain patient. They do not leave the obedience of Allāh *taʿālā* wilfully. They are constantly worried about not doing anything against Allāh's orders. They are the *qānitīn*. The men and women to whom Allāh *taʿālā* gave glad tidings of His forgiveness and great reward in Sūrah al-Ahzāb includes the *qānitīn* and *qānitāt*. Allāh *taʿālā* conveyed the glad tiding of a very great reward on the day of Resurrection for the men and women who are truly obedient and devoted to Him. In short, one of the qualities of the people of

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[1] Sūrah al-Ahzāb, 33: 35.
[2] Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 273.

taqwā is that they are obedient to Allāh *taʿālā* and do not disobey Him.[1]

Salāt and salām

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا صَلُّوْا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا.

Allāh and His angels send mercy to the Prophet. O believers! Send mercy to him and salute him with salutations of peace.[2]

Durūd sharīf is a means for great successes and noble gifts for the Sufis. Some Sufis say that if a seeker does not find a qualified mentor for his training, he must make durūd sharīf an essential part of his spiritual regimen. This will suffice for his guidance. The person who is given direction from Allāh *taʿālā* while adhering to the teachings and mannerisms of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* will progress to the point of perfection. He will be blessed with close proximity to Allāh *taʿālā* and attachment to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Some Sufis emphasise the abundant repetition of *Qul Huwallāhu Aḥad* and durūd sharīf. We recognize Allāh *taʿālā* through the former, and acquire the company of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* through the latter. They also say that the one who reads durūd sharīf in abundance will be honoured with seeing Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* either in a dream or in a state of wakefulness.

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[1] *Maʿālim al-ʿIrfān*, vol. 4, p. 70.
[2] Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 56.

Shaykh Imām ʿAlī Muttaqī *rahimahullāh* quotes in *Hukm al-Kabīr* from Shaykh Ahmad ibn Mūsā *rahimahullāh* and the latter day Shādhilīyyah masters that if a person does not find auliyā' to guide him, then in order to acquire Allāh's proximity, he must be constant in dhikr and durūd sharīf while adhering to the dictates of the Sharīʿat. Durūd sharīf will create a great effulgence within a person. This will show him the way and enable him to acquire blessings directly from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The gist of the Shādhilī way – which is a branch of the Qādirīyyah – is to acquire blessings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* through constant adherence to the Sharīʿat.

The book *Misbāh az-Zalām* quotes the following:

Hadrat Kaʿb ibn Ahbār *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation to Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* saying: "O Mūsā! If there remains no one on earth to praise Me, I will not send a drop of rain from above, I will not allow a single seed to sprout…" Allāh *taʿālā* listed many other things and eventually said: "O Mūsā! Would you like to get as close to Me as your speech is to you? Or as close as your whisperings are to your heart, your soul to your body and your light to your eyes?" Hadrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* said: "O my Allāh! This is what I really want." Allāh *taʿālā* said: "Send abundant durūd to Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and you will acquire this affiliation."

Khidr and Ilyās *ʿalayhimas salām* said that a man from Syria came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and said: "O Rasūlullāh! My father is extremely old and has lost his eyesight due to weakness. He does not have the strength to walk. It is his ardent wish to have the honour of seeing you."

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Tell him to read *sallallāhu ʿalā Muḥammad* for one week at night, and he will see me in a dream. Also tell him to relate this Ḥadīth from me." He did as he was advised, he saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in a dream and related this Ḥadīth.

The same book quotes from Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* who said that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Convey salutations to me and to the other Prophets as well because Allāh *taʿālā* commissioned them as Prophets as He commissioned me." This Ḥadīth is related by Bayhaqī in *Shuʿab al-Īmān* and quoted in *ad-Daʿwāt al-Kabīr.*

If a person reads the following durūd 1 000 times on a Friday, he will not depart from this world without being shown his abode in Paradise. The durūd is:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّاٰلِهٖ اَلْفَ اَلْفَ مَرَّةً

Ḥaḍrat Ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to Zayd ibn Wahb: Don't give up reading durūd 1 000 times on a Friday. You must read the following durūd:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدِ النَّبِيِّ الْاُمِّيِّ

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to practise on this. Āmīn. (compiler)

Salām and tahīyyah

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَإِذَا حُيِّيْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوْا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَآ أَوْ رُدُّوْهَا ط إِنَّ اللهَ كَانَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيْبًا.

When anyone prays for you, you should say a better prayer for him, or say the same in return. Surely Allāh keeps count of everything.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* teaches the etiquette of offering salām and replying to it.

The literal meaning of *taḥīyyah* is to say *ḥayyākallāh* (may Allāh keep you alive) to a person. Before the advent of Islam, it was the habit of the Arabs to greet by saying *ḥayyākallāh* or *anʿamallāhu bika ʿaynan*, or *anʿim ṣabāḥan* and other similar forms of greeting. Islam changed the form of greeting by replacing it with *as-salāmu ʿalaykum*, which means: may you be safe from every type of problem, grief and misery.

Ibn ʿArabī *raḥimahullāh* states in *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* that the word salām is one of the beautiful names of Allāh *taʿālā* and that the words *as-salām ʿalaykum* mean: *Allāhu raqībun ʿalaykum* – may Allāh be your protector.[2]

Tahajjud

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمِنَ الَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسٰى أَنْ يَّبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُوْدًا

In some portion of the night remain awake with the Qur'ān – this addition is for you only. It may be that your Sustainer will raise you to a laudable position.[3]

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[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 86.
[2] Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 501.
[3] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 79.

Tahajjud salāh has a special influence in acquiring Maqām-e-Mahmūd

Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* said that this verse instructs Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to perform tahajjud salāh. It then promises him Maqām-e-Mahmūd, i.e. the major intercession. This shows that tahajjud salāh has a special influence in acquiring Maqām-e-Mahmūd.

A Hadīth states:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يعقد الشيطان على قافية رأس أحدكم إذا هو نام ثلث عقد يضرب على عقدة عليك ليل طويل فارقد. فإن استيقظ فذكر الله انحلت عقدة، فإن توضأ انحلت عقدة، فإن صلى انحلت عقدة، فأصبح نشيطا طيب النفس، وإلا أصبح خبيث النفس كسلان. متفق عليه.[1]

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: When you go to sleep, Shaytān ties three knots at the back of your head. He strikes each knot saying: "The night is still long, you may continue sleeping." If a person wakes up and remembers Allāh, one knot becomes untied. When he performs wudū', another knot becomes untied. When he performs salāh, the third knot become untied. The person then spends the morning energetically and enthusiastically. If not, he feels miserable and lazy.

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[1] مشكوة المصابيح، ١٠٨.

عن أبي أمامة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عليكم بقيام الليل فإنه دأب الصالحين قبلكم وهو قربة لكم إلى ربكم ومكفرة للسيئات ومنهاة عن الإثم.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Abū Umāmah raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: Be regular and punctual in performing the night ṣalāh because it has been the practice of the righteous before you. It is a means of proximity to your Lord, an expiation for sins, and a preventative against sins.

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من تعار من الليل فقال لا اله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له له الملك وله الحمد وهو على كل شيء قدير. الحمد لله وسبحان الله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر ولا حول ولا قوة الا بالله، ثم قال اللّٰهُمَّ اغفر لي أو دعا استجيب، فإن توضأ وصلى قبلت صلوته.

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam said: When a person wakes up at night and says the following, and then says "O Allāh! Forgive me" or makes a supplication, his supplication is answered. If he performs wuḍū' and performs ṣalāh, his ṣalāh is accepted. [The duʿā' is]:

لَا اِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ. اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَسُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَلَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ

[1] مشكوة المصابيح، ١٠٨.

Note: We learn from the above Hadīth that if a person wakes up at night and makes duʿā' only, his duʿā' is accepted. If he performs wudū' and salāh, the virtues will be much more. (compiler)

Nādirah and nāzirah

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وُجُوْهٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ، اِلٰى رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

Many faces on that day will be fresh. Looking at their Sustainer.[1]

The word *nādirah* means to be fresh and verdant. In other words, on the day of Resurrection there will be certain faces which will be fresh and beaming. They will be looking at Allāh *taʿālā*.

This proves that in the Hereafter, the people of Paradise will get an opportunity to look at Allāh *taʿālā*. This is the unanimous belief of the Ahl as-Sunnat wa al-Jamāʿat, all the ʿulamā' and jurists. The Muʿtazilah and Khawārij reject this. Their rejection is based on philosophical doubts. They say that there are prerequisites of distance between the one looking and the one who is looked at, and these prerequisites are not found between the Creator and the creation. The Ahl as-Sunnat hold the view that these prerequisites need not be fulfilled in the Hereafter. Points related to direction, shape and form will not be considered in the Hereafter. This subject is clearly established through many Aḥādīth. Yes, there will be different levels among the people of Paradise as regards beholding Allāh *taʿālā*. Some people will be able to see him once a week on a

[1] Sūrah al-Qiyāmah, 75: 22-23.

Friday, others will see Him daily in the morning and evening, while others will see Allāh *taʿālā* all the time.[1]

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* confer this bounty to us. Āmīn. (compiler)

Kalimah tayyibah and istighfār

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاعْلَمْ اَنَّهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ، وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوٰكُمْ.

Know, then, that none is worthy of worship but Allāh. Seek forgiveness for your sins and for the believing men and believing women. Allāh knows all your comings and goings and your resting place.[2]

We now take the opportunity of quoting a portion on the subject of the kalimah tayyibah and istighfār from a hand-written manuscript of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh*. This manuscript is to be found in the library of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

نبه على أن آياته المحكمة ترجع أعدادها إلى آية محكمة وهي لا إله إلا الله، فما من علم من العلوم في الغيب ولا في الشهادة إلا وهو منتظم في سلك لا إله إلا الله، مثمرين ثمار أسرارها، ولهذا اكتفى لعلمها

[1] Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qurʾān*, vol. 8, p. 627.
[2] Sūrah Muhammad, 47: 19.

للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أحكاما وتفصيلا في قوله تعالى: فَاعْلَمْ اَنَّهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ، وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ.

Attention is drawn to the fact that the muḥkamāt verses all revert to a single muḥkamah verse, and that is the kalimah Lā ilāha illallāh. Thus, from among all the unseen and seen sciences, there is not a single science which is not attached to Lā ilāha illallāh, where it derives the fruits of its mysteries. This is why Allāh taʿālā sufficed with this verse for Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam as regards the injunctions and details. The verse is: "Know, then, that none is worthy of worship but Allāh. Seek forgiveness for your sins and for the believing men and believing women."

In this verse, Allāh *taʿālā* gives three pieces of advice to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*: (1) *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* is an essential reality in which no change or alteration is possible. Knowledge and conviction in it is therefore compulsory. Giving testimony to it is a boon for servants. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* ordered Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to acknowledge it not only with his tongue, but with knowledge and conviction. After all, all sciences revert to this knowledge and the central point of all is knowledge of the kalimah ṭayyibah. Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *raḥimahullāh* shed sufficient light on this subject in his letter which was repeatedly related to us by Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *raḥimahullāh*. He used to say that this is the fruit and result of the recognition of this kalimah by Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid *raḥimahullāh*.

Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *raḥimahullāh* wrote a letter from prison to his sons Khwājah Muḥammad

Saʿīd *raḥimahullāh* and Khwājah Muḥammad Maʿsūm *raḥimahullāh* in which he instructed them to make a habit of repeating the kalimah ṭayyibah. He also ordered them not to make efforts to obtain his release from prison. He gave them a few other pieces of advice as well. The letter reads as follows:

My dear sons! Although a tribulation is very bitter and unpalatable, it can be a great boon. Now that you have the opportunity, remain occupied in your work while expressing your gratitude to Allāh *taʿālā*. Do not waste a single moment of opportunity. There are three points: (1) reciting the Qur'ān, (2) performing ṣalāh with lengthy recitations of the Qur'ān, (3) repeating the kalimah ṭayyibah – Lā Ilāha Illallāh. Any one of these three must always be done. When you say "Lā" then reject all gods and repulse your wants because asking for your wants is also a claim to your godhood.

A point which comes to my mind is that when Allāh *taʿālā* ordered His most beloved Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to pray for increase in knowledge (Say: O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge), it ought to be knowledge of Allāh's divinity, Lordship and His other beautiful names. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best, and His knowledge is most perfect.

The second piece of advice in the above-quoted verse is to seek forgiveness from your sins. This, notwithstanding the fact that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was maʿṣūm – divinely protected from sin. This shows the loftiness and greatness of the act of seeking forgiveness. Just as knowledge of tauḥīd is the most comprehensive of all sciences, we could say that the act of seeking forgiveness is the most virtuous of actions. This is why the followers of

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* have to pay due importance to it. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

The third point is that Allāh *taʿālā* – out of His mercy and kindness – could not tolerate the followers of His beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who are also beloved to Him and have been honoured by many qualities to be deprived of this favour and bounty. This is why he advised His beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to include his ummat (Muslim men and women) in the act of seeking forgiveness. After all, his followers are more in need of seeking forgiveness on account of their sins. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* made this prayer for all believing men and women.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِجَمِيْعِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

O Allāh! Forgive me, my parents and all the believing men and women.

Since Allāh *taʿālā* ordered Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to seek forgiveness for his ummat, Allāh *taʿālā* will certainly pardon them their sins. (compiler)

Sinners are also inheritors of the Book

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

ثُمَّ اَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتٰبَ الَّذِيْنَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا، فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهٖ، وَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ، وَّمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِاِذْنِ اللهِ، ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيْرُ.

Then We made inheritors of the Book those whom We chose from among Our servants. There are from

among them he who wrongs himself, he who follows a middle way, and he who has gone ahead with good deeds by the order of Allāh. This, indeed, is the supreme virtue.[1]

After Our Messenger, We made inheritors of this final book – the Qur'ān – such people whom We had selected for this inheritance. In other words, We made Our selected servants – the believers – inheritors of the Qur'ān. We appointed as heirs to this blessed Book people who are better than all other nations. They are superior to the unbelievers who embrace īmān. Nonetheless, all members of this nation are not equal. They are divided into three categories:

(1) Some of them are wrongdoers in the sense that they even leave out obligatory duties. Although they are heirs to this Book, they fall into sin and evils. They have īmān but they commit sins and wrong their selves. They also repent after committing sins.

وَاٰخَرُوْنَ مُرْجَوْنَ لِأَمْرِ اللّٰهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَإِمَّا يَتُوْبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ط وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ.

There are others whose case is deferred to the order of Allāh. He will either punish them or forgive them. Allāh is all-knowing, wise.[2]

قُلْ يٰعِبَادِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا، اِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.

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[1] Sūrah al-Fāṭir, 35: 32.
[2] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 106.

Say: O My servants who have committed excesses against their own selves! Do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Surely Allāh forgives all sins. Surely He alone is all-forgiving, all-merciful.[1]

(2) Some are in the middle – they are neither totally obedient nor totally immersed in sin. Allāh *taʿālā* says with reference to them:

وَاٰخَرُوْنَ اعْتَرَفُوْا بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ خَلَطُوْا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَّاٰخَرَ سَيِّئًا

There are others who have confessed their sins [after] having mixed a righteous deed with another that was evil.[2]

(3) Some people move ahead in good deeds and advance in this regard. They are at the forefront on the field of obedience. They are the perfect servants of Allāh *taʿālā* who – through Allāh's inspiration – surpass others in good deeds. This group will enter Paradise without accounting and reckoning.

Those who belong to the second group will be taken to account for their deeds. Those of the first group will suffer grief and worry on account of their evils.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* says that Allāh *taʿālā* – through an explicit text – divided the ummat into three categories. The highest are those who had surpassed all. This category was reserved for the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous. This group is also referred to as the muqarrabīn. The second group comprises the average ones. They are referred to as the as-hāb al-yamīn and the abrār. The lowest group

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[1] Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 53.
[2] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 102.

contains those who wronged their own selves. They have īmān and correct beliefs but are found wanting in their actions and deeds. They eventually make up for their shortcomings through seeking forgiveness and expressing remorse. It is necessary for a righteous caliph to be from the muqarrabīn.[1]

It is most certainly a great favour of Allāh *taʿālā* that from the entire world, He selected this ummat to inherit this Book without any striving just as wealth is inherited without any effort. It is definitely a great bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* for having selected this ummat for this great gift. Alternatively, this could mean that for certain servants to be able to surpass others in good actions and pious deeds is a very great favour of Allāh *taʿālā*. Had it not been for Allāh's inspiration, they would not have been able to progress and advance in good deeds.

The 'ulamā' unanimously concur that the three categories mentioned in the above-quoted verse are all believers. Some 'ulamā' say that the category of "he who wrongs himself" belongs to the unbelievers, and that those who will be saved are only two groups, viz. those who are in the middle way and those who have surpassed in good. These two will enter Paradise, while the first group will not. This view is in conflict with explicit and clear Aḥādīth.

Erudite scholars give preference to the first view, and it is also the one preferred by Imām Ibn Jarīr *raḥimahullāh* and Ibn Kathīr *raḥimahullāh*. The nature and context of the verse also gives support to this view. The three categories mentioned in the verse refers to categories of believers who believed in this Book and inherited it.

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[1] *Izālah al-Khifā'*.

In short, the three categories referred to in the verse are categories of believers. The verse eventually makes mention of the salvation of the three categories and their entry into Paradise:

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَّدْخُلُوْنَهَا

Gardens of eternity which they will enter.

The pronoun in the word *yadkhulūnahā* refers to all three categories. Thus, to specify it to only one category is a specification without proof.

Imām Qurṭubī *raḥimahullāh* says that this is also reported from Ḥaḍrat ʿUmar, ʿUthmān, Abū ad-Dardā', Ibn Masʿūd, ʿUqbah ibn ʿAmr and ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*. They all say that the pronoun refers to all three categories.[1]

We now quote a portion of an explanation of the words *sābiqum bil khayrāt* from *Rāh Saʿādat* which is a translation of ʿAllāmah Ibn Qayyim's book *Ṭarīq al-Hijratayn Wa Bāb as-Saʿādatayn*.

Those who have gone ahead with good deeds: Our hearts tremble when we describe this group and we seek Allāh's pardon. We are very far from these attributes. In fact, we did not even get a whiff of them, nor did we inhale their fragrance. However, our love for our people demands that we describe them to a certain extent in the hope that they will benefit.

Those who have not reached this lofty position will perceive their lowness and insignificance. Instead of succumbing to pride and haughtiness, they will make humbleness and humility their hallmark. It is

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[1] Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 418.

highly possible that a person's feelings will be aroused, he will desire to be affiliated to those pure souls, and he may receive a certain moment from Allāh *taʿālā* through which he is conferred with the honour of acceptance.

These are people whose hearts are filled with Allāh's recognition, love, fear and greatness. Love for Allāh *taʿālā* has penetrated every vein of their bodies. They have forgotten everyone else and become embodiments of Allāh's remembrance, love, fear, hope, yearning, reliance, turning and submission. When they lie down on their beds, their souls are close to the True Master. They remember Allāh's lofty attributes and His beautiful names. They visualize Allāh *taʿālā* in these attributes and names, and Allāh's light illuminates their hearts in such a way that their hearts are immersed in Allāh's recognition and love. They pass their nights separated from their beds, while their hearts are covered with the sheet of humility and submission in prostration. What an excellent prostration that will be if a person is unable to raise his head from it before the day of Resurrection!

When any of them wakes up early from his sleep, he utters the following words with full consciousness and emotion:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ اَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا اَمَاتَنَا وَاِلَيْهِ النُّشُوْرُ

All praise is due to Allāh who gave us life after having caused us to die. We are to be raised before Him.

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ. سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَلَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ.

The person perceives that he had died and Allāh *taʿālā* gave him life again. His feelings and movements had ended, he could have encountered thousands of dangers, even a small animal could have been harmful to him. Despite this, Allāh *taʿālā* protected him. If a person's soul is more perceptive, he can clearly feel and perceive the dangers which were present but he was protected by Allāh *taʿālā*. Evil and satanic forces were wanting to cause harm to the souls of the believers and lead them astray, but Allāh *taʿālā* gave them refuge. These are the feelings which manifest themselves in the form of the above duʿā' as a form of gratitude.

Together with this, the person realizes that just as Allāh *taʿālā* has the power to give him this life after death [sleep], He has the power to give him life on the day of Resurrection. The words "We are to be raised before Him" make reference to this.

Together with this feeling of appreciation and servitude, he performs wudū', casts aside the sleepiness which he is feeling and occupies himself in salāh – that salāh which is a coolness to his eyes, a paradise for his soul, tranquillity to his heart, and a treasure house of enjoyment and peace. It is as though this wish was embedded in his heart throughout the night and was realized at the break of dawn.

He then performs the Sunnat salāh and lies down for a short while so that he is refreshed for the fard

salāh. During this time, he occupies himself in repeating:

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ، لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ

O the ever-living! O the maintainer of all! There is none worthy of worship except You.

He then tries to stand directly behind the imām or to his right in the first row of salāh. If he cannot do this, he tries his utmost to be as close to the imām as possible.

In short, he pays due attention to all his salāhs and desires Allāh's pleasure in whatever he does. Despite this, he repents and seeks forgiveness after every action. The fact of the matter is that this is the station where the more obedience there is, the more the repentance and seeking forgiveness. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to seek forgiveness three times after every salāh.

وَبِالْاَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ

They seek forgiveness at the time of dawn.

Hadrat Hasan *rahimahullāh* said: Continue salāh until dawn, then remain seated and occupy yourself in seeking forgiveness. Look, this verse instructs us to seek forgiveness after dawn.

ثُمَّ أَفِيْضُوْا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللّٰهَ ط إِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ.

Then return for the ṯawāf from where all the people return, and ask forgiveness of Allāh, surely Allāh is forgiving, merciful.[1]

Wuḍū' is an act of worship itself, yet a duʿā' is prescribed after it:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِيْ مِنَ التَّوَّابِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِيْ مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ

O Allāh! Include me among the repentant ones and among those who are purified.

The person is dyed in servitude and submission internally and externally. The movements of his self and body are in accordance with Allāh's pleasure.

Total submission

As regards intention and action, perfect servitude demands that the likes of Allāh *taʿālā* must be the likes of the servant, and His dislikes must be the servant's dislikes. He must leave no stone unturned in fulfilling Allāh's likes and keeping away from His dislikes.

As regards knowledge and cognition, perfect servitude demands that the person must have correct knowledge of Allāh's names, attributes and actions; and be fully satisfied with them. Together with this, he must fulfil every attribute which is demanded by whatever order is issued. This is the way of the special servants, but people are generally unmindful of it because it requires firmness in knowledge, perfect recognition, and the courage to refute falsehood. This is why most people are only attracted to the customs of the pious. Based on their good thoughts about them, they do not progress beyond

[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 199.

the statements of the pious. The customs and statements thus become barriers for them. There are very few who – through their strength of will – break down the barriers and experience spiritual conditions by pondering and reflecting over Allāh's names and attributes. This is a unique path which brings good fortune and a person lies on his bed with peace and tranquillity. What a major difference between these two paths![1]

Following of lusts and abandoning salāh

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَخَلَفَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهَوٰتِ فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غَيًّا.

There came in their place successors who abandoned salāh and went after their lusts. They will soon see the destruction.[2]

After the righteous people, such unsuitable successors came who destroyed salāh. Abandoning salāh completely, delaying its performance or not performing it correctly are all included in the destruction of salāh. Allāh *taʿālā* says in Sūrah al-Māʿūn:

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّيْنَ، الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُوْنَ.

Destruction for such performers of salāh who are unmindful of their salāh.[3]

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[1] *Rāh Saʿādat* (translated by Maulānā ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm Sāhib Islāhī, p. 174.
[2] Sūrah Maryam, 19: 59.
[3] Sūrah al-Māʿūn, 107: 4-5.

Hadrat Musʿab ibn Saʿd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that he asked his father Hadrat Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* about the words "who are unmindful of their salāh". He said: It does not mean that they do not experience wandering thoughts in their salāh. Rather, it means that they do not bother about the times of salāh. They remain occupied in other tasks and are not conscious of the time of salāh.

Note: Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* explained these verses as follows: Although following of lusts and desires included the abandonment of salāh, Allāh *taʿālā* mentioned salāh separately to demonstrate the extreme repugnance of abandoning and destroying salāh. (compiler)

Following of lusts prompts a person to every other evil

The words "went after their lusts" explain the fundamental disease in man, viz. following his lusts and desires. If a person does not combat the desires of his carnal self, is not resolute in this regard and allows it to do whatever it desires; then this is a prelude to severe loss and a cause of destruction. The fundamental reason for shortcomings in physical acts of worship like salāh and fasting, monetary acts of worship like zakāh and charities, or committing sins is this very same following of one's lusts. The following is stated in *Rūh al-Maʿānī*:

الشهوات عام في كل مشتهي يشغل عن الصلوة وعن ذكر الله تعالى

Lusts refers to every desire which keeps a person occupied from salāh and Allāh's remembrance.

A person does not perform salāh because his self is not ready for it, he does not want to give up his sleep for it. He does not pay zakāh because his self does not want to. He resorts to theft, treachery, robbery and cheating because his self desires abundant wealth. He consumes alcohol, commits adultery and other invitations towards adultery because the self takes enjoyment from these activities. In short, the fundamental destruction of man lies in following the desires of his self. Following of the self is the root of all sin.

They will soon see the destruction:

The original meaning of *ghayy* is to wander and stray from the right path. This is why some scholars translate this sentence as: They will receive the punishment for their deviation. Others say that they will meet destruction. The author of *Rūḥ al-Maʿānī* narrates on the authority of Ibn Jarīr *raḥimahullāh* and Ṭabarānī *raḥimahullāh* from Ḥaḍrat Abū Umāmah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* who said that *ghayy* refers to a river in the bottom of Hell in which the pus of the inmates of Hell will flow. Ḥaḍrat Ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* says that *ghayy* is a river or valley made up of the pus of the inmates of Hell. It is a very deep river and its taste is most terrible. Those who used to follow their lusts will be cast into it.[1]

Note: In order for us to be worthy heirs and inheritors of our pious predecessors and seniors, it is essential for us to give up those evils which Allāh *taʿālā* mentioned, viz. destroying salāh and following of lusts; and we will have to do good deeds instead. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Ṣāḥib

[1] *Anwār al-Bayān*, vol. 3, p. 476.

Partābgarhī *raḥimahullāh* used to say that people say: "Allāh *taʿālā* is all-forgiving and most merciful, He will certainly forgive us." I say: "Forgiveness is not so easy. Rather, it requires repentance, īmān and good deeds." Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

وَإِنِّيْ لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَنْ تَابَ وَاٰمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدٰى

I am extremely forgiving to him who repents, believes, does good deeds, and then remains on the [straight] path.[1]

After believing in the subject matter of this verse, we must bring good actions into our life. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us. Āmīn. (compiler)

Enjoining good and forbidding evil

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَّدْعُوْنَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ط وَأُولٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ.

There should be among you a group that continually invites towards good, continually commands good deeds and forbids evil. It is they who have reached their goal.[2]

The words "There should be among you a group" make reference to the fact that the presence of such a group is essential. If a government does not carry out this responsibility, it will be compulsory on all Muslims to establish such a group because their collective life will only be protected for as long as such a group exists. Reference is then made to a few

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[1] Sūrah Ṭā Hā, 20: 82.
[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 104.

distinguishing qualities of this group. They invite towards good. The main objective will be to call towards good. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* explained the meaning of good by saying:

الخير هو اتباع القرآن وسنتي

Good refers to following the Qur'ān and my Sunnat. (Ibn Kathīr)

There can be no better and more comprehensive definition of good. It encompasses the entire Dīn and Sharīʿat. Furthermore, Allāh *taʿālā* uses the present tense to show that it will be the continuous job and responsibility of this group to invite towards good.

From the order of enjoining good and forbidding evil, it could have been understood that its need would be in specific occasions, i.e. when they see evils being committed. By saying *yadʿūna ilal khayr* – Allāh *taʿālā* teaches us that it will be the task of this group to invite towards good even if no evils are found at present or it is not the time for the fulfilment of a certain obligation. For example, it is not the time of salāh from after sunrise until noon. Even then, this group will be inviting towards the performance of salāh because the moment a salāh time enters, it becomes necessary to perform it. Or, it is not the time of fasting as yet; the month of Ramadān is still far. Notwithstanding it, this group is not unmindful of its responsibility. Rather, it will remind people from before hand that when the month of Ramadān arrives, it will be obligatory on them to keep fast. In short, it will be the responsibility of this group to continually invite towards good.

There are two levels of inviting towards good. One is to invite non-Muslims towards Islam. Every Muslim

in general and this group specifically will have to invite nations of the world towards Islam. They will have to do this verbally and through their actions. Thus, we see that the verse which instructs Muslims to wage jihād, praises true Muslims as follows:

اَلَّذِيْنَ إِنْ مَّكَّنّٰهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ وَأَمَرُوْا بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ط وَلِلّٰهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُوْرِ.

Those whom, when We give them power in the land, they establish salāh, give zakāh, command good and prohibit evil. In Allāh's hands is the final outcome of all events.[1]

If the Muslim nation of today upholds the purpose of its life by inviting other nations to Islam, then all the illnesses which have spread into us on account of imitating other nations will come to an end. When a nation resolves to this great objective (of inviting towards good) and realizes that it has to overpower other nations through its knowledge and practical life, and that it is its responsibility to teach and train other nations, then even its differences will cease and the entire nation will collectively dedicate itself to the realization of one great objective. This was the secret behind the successes of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*. It is related in a Ḥadīth that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* read the above verse and said: This is the special attribute of the Saḥābah. (Ibn Jarīr) In other words, this special group is the group of the Saḥābah because every member of this august group understood the responsibility of inviting towards good.

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[1] Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 41.

The second level of inviting towards good is to invite Muslims themselves. Muslims in general and the special group of Muslims have to spread Islam among the Muslims and fulfil the responsibility of inviting towards good. Within them there will be one da'wat which will be general. That is, all Muslims must be taught the essential injunctions and ethics of Islam. The other will be specific, i.e. the creation and development of experts in the sciences of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Another verse of the Qur'ān makes reference to this:

فَلَوْ لَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوْا فِي الدِّيْنِ وَلِيُنْذِرُوْا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوْآ إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُوْنَ.

Why, then, did a section from each group not go forth so that they may acquire an understanding of religion and inform their people when they return to them so that they might be on their guard?[1]

Further on, another distinguishing feature of this group is described:

يَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

They enjoin good and forbid evil.

The word *maʿrūf* includes all good deeds and actions which Islam has commanded and every Prophet in every era endeavoured to propagate. Since these good deeds and actions are well-known and recognized, they are referred to as *maʿrūf* (the literal meaning of which is something which is known).

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 122.

The word *munkar* refers to all those evils which have been specified as such by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Instead of using the words *wājibāt* and *maʿāsī*, the words *maʿrūf* and *munkar* are used. The probable reason for this is that the issue of prohibiting and stopping will only apply in matters which are well-known to the Muslim nation, and are unanimously accepted as such. The issue of prohibiting and stopping will not apply to issues based on ijtihād in which there can be differences of opinion under the principles of the Sharīʿat. It is most unfortunate that this wise teaching is generally disregarded, issues based on ijtihād have become points of contention, the Muslim nation is split into factions and sects, and this attitude is considered to be the greatest act of virtue. On the other hand, very little attention is given to stopping sins which are unanimously accepted as sins.

The verse concludes with the praiseworthy end and destiny of this group:

وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ

It is they who have reached their goal.

In other words, these are the truly successful ones. They are the ones who enjoy success in this world and the Hereafter. The first demonstration of this verse is the group of Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* who took up the great responsibility of inviting towards good, enjoining good and forbidding evil; and pervaded the entire world in a very short time. The mighty Roman and Persian empires were crushed,

the world was taught noble character and purity, and the lamps of piety and virtue were lit.[1]

This nation is the best on account of enjoining good and forbidding evil

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللهِ ط وَلَوْ اٰمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ط مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ.

You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world - you enjoin good and forbid evil, and you believe in Allāh. Had the people of the Book believed, it would have been better for them. A few among them are believers but most of them are disobedient.[2]

In several verses the Qur'ān explains the reasons for labelling this nation "the best of all nations". It has been created specifically to convey benefit to Allāh's creation. Its greatest benefit is that its fundamental obligation is to be concerned about the spiritual and ethical rectification of the creation. The most amount of enjoining good and forbidding evil was accomplished through this nation. Although the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil was given to previous nations – as detailed in many Aḥādīth – the order of jihād was not prescribed to them. Their enjoining good and forbidding evil could only be done with the heart and tongue. The nation of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was given a third type of

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[1] Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 142.
[2] Sūrah Āl ʿImrān, 3: 110.

enjoining good, i.e. with the hand. This includes all forms of jihād. The promulgation of laws through an Islamic government is also a part of this. Previous nations disregarded the salient features of Dīn and obliterated them in this way. In like manner, enjoining good was totally discarded by them. As for this nation, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* foretold that there will be a group right until the day of Resurrection which will remain firm on the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil.

The second distinguishing feature of this nation is *tu'minūna billāh* – you believe in Allāh. The question which could be posed here is that belief in Allāh *taʿālā* was common in the teachings of all the Prophets of the past and their respective nations. Why should it be a distinguishing feature of this nation? An obvious answer is that original īmān is found in all, but there are different levels as regards the perfection of īmān. The level which is enjoyed by this nation distinguishes it over other nations of the past.

Towards the end of the verse Allāh *taʿālā* says that there are some people of the Book who are Muslims. This refers to those who believed in Muhammad *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, e.g. Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Salām *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and others.[1]

The verse under discussion refers to Muslims as the best of all nations. The reason given is that you have been created for the benefit of Allāh's creations. You enjoin them with good, prohibit them from evil, and you see to their spiritual and ethical rectification and reformation. You have been sent as an example to

[1] Muftī Muhammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 150.

the entire world. People must look up to you and follow your example.

O Muslims! Be fully conscious of your responsibility. You are the trustees of tauḥīd and are required to promulgate Allāh's orders on earth. The purpose of your life is to establish virtue, wipe out evil, and accept Allāh *taʿālā* as your sole object of worship.

It should be clear that the word *munkar* refers to the evil which is labelled as evil by the Sharīʿat. It includes present day centres of art, music colleges, television programmes, etc. This verse clearly demonstrates that this nation will only be the "best of all nations" if these qualities are found in it, viz. belief in Allāh, enjoining good and forbidding evil. Ḥaḍrat ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* is reported to have said that anyone who wishes to enter this nation must complete these prerequisites laid down by Allāh *taʿālā*. The one who does not have these three qualities will be like the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) who have been castigated in this verse.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Abū Saʿīd Khudrī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

من رأى منكم منكرا فليغيره بيده، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه، وإن لم يستطع فبقلبه، وذلك أضعف الإيمان.

Whoever sees an evil must change it with his hands. If he cannot, he must change it with his tongue. If he cannot, he must consider it evil in his heart; and this is the weakest level of īmān.

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[1] Maulānā Ghiyāth ad-Dīn Ṣāḥib Maẓāhirī: *Tibyān al-Qur'ān*, p. 81.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* mentioned the hand first because it has the most power in removing evil. For example, to break the utensils of alcohol, to break musical instruments, to come as a barrier between an oppressor and the oppressed, to return a confiscated property to its owner.

If a person cannot display his disapproval with his hands – because he fears physical or monetary harm – he must do it with his tongue; there could be benefit in it. For example, by shouting or beseeching a person. If a person is able to do all this, he must instruct the other to do it, scold and reprimand him, remind him of Allāh *taʿālā*, remind him of His punishment. He must resort to a lenient or harsh approach, depending on the situation. There are times when a soft and wise approach can achieve much more than what a sword and a powerful government can achieve.

If a person cannot remove the evil with his tongue, he must disapprove of it with his heart. He must consider the evil to be unacceptable and intolerable. The effects of his disapproval must be visible on him. At the same time, he must make a firm resolution that if he is able to wipe out the evil with his hand or tongue, he will do it. This is because it is wājib to disapprove of evil. As for the one who is happy with it, he is equal to the one who is committing it. Disapproving it with the heart when he does not have the power to resort to all other means is the lowest form of īmān, even though there is definitely a benefit in this īmān. Disapproving evil with the heart only will not remove the evil, the objective is that it has to be removed. This is why the person has displayed a shortcoming and a weakness. On the other hand,

verbal and physical disapproval has the benefit of expressing disapproval and removing the evil.

The most effective sign of showing disapproval is to boycott the sinner. All interactions, dealings, greetings, etc. must be given up. The action of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* is a proof for this. This was with respect to three people who did not join in the expedition to Tabūk without any valid reason. The three were Hadrat Kaʿb ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*, Murārah ibn Rabīʿ *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hilāl ibn Umayyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* shunned them and ordered the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* to sever ties with them and to stop talking with them. Fifty days passed in this way. They were most remorseful over their actions, repented and turned to Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* accepted their repentance.

Hadrat Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

والذي نفسي بيده، لتأمرن بالمعروف ولتنهون عن المنكر، أو ليوشكن الله أن يبعث عليكم عقابا منه، ثم تدعونه فلا يستجاب لكم.

(رواه الترمذي)

I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life! You will most certainly have to enjoin good and forbid evil or else Allāh will send His punishment to you. You will then supplicate to Him and He will not accept your supplication.

Hadrat Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

مثل القائم في حدود الله والواقع فيها كمثل قوم استهموا على سفينة فصار بعضهم أعلاها وبعضهم أسفلها، فكان الذي في أسفلها إذا استقوا من الماء مروا على من فوقهم فقالوا لو أنا خرقنا في نصيبنا خرقا ولم نؤذ من فوقنا، فإن تركوهم ما أرادوا هلكوا جميعا، وإن أخذوا على أيديهم نجوا ونجوا جميعا. (رواه البخاري والترمذي)

The example of the one who upholds the laws of Allāh and the one who does not is like that of some people who boarded a ship. Some of them went to the upper deck while others to the lower deck. When those of the lower deck needed water, they had to go to the upper deck. If they think to themselves that if they made a hole in their section [the lower deck], they will not disturb those of the upper deck, and the latter allow them to make that hole, then all of them will be destroyed. But if those of the upper deck stop them from doing that, all of them will be saved.[1]

Note: The need and importance of enjoining good and forbidding evil is clearly learnt from these blessed Ahādīth. Look at how Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* explained this reality through an example. This could only be done by prophet-hood. (compiler)

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* writes with reference to enjoining good and forbidding evil:

Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* has written very eloquently on the subject of enjoining good and forbidding evil in his book *Ihyā' ʿUlūm ad-Dīn*. He writes:

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[1] *Al-Ibdāʿ Fī Madārr al-Ibtidāʿ*.

> The position of enjoining good and forbidding evil is that of the greatest pivot in Islam. It is the important responsibility for which all the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* were commissioned. If it is shelved aside and its practice is abandoned, prophet-hood will become useless and religiosity will wane. Laziness will become common, misguidance will spread, ignorance will proliferate, corruption will permeate, unlawfulness will spread, the lands will become desolate and the populace will be destroyed. Even if they do not perceive and realize their destruction before the day of Resurrection. The thing which we fear will certainly take place. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return

Nowadays we notice that both knowledge and practice of this greatest pivot have departed from the Muslim nation. Let alone its reality, only its custom remains. Flattery and adulation have overpowered the hearts of people. Meditation about Allāh *taʿālā* has been completely wiped out of their hearts. People have become like free animals in following their lusts and desires. A genuine believer who does not fear the criticism of critics for Allāh's sake has become a rarity.

Advising, admonishing, enjoining good and forbidding evil are the special responsibilities of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. They were commissioned for this noble objective. They used to receive revelation from Allāh *taʿālā* for every minute thing, and they used to invite towards Allāh *taʿālā* and

propagate His orders in the light of that revelation. They did not transgress in the least.

The Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* are taught the procedures together with the objectives. They do not have their own choice in the adoption of procedures. When Allāh *taʿālā* sent Ḥaḍrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* to preach to Pharaoh, He ordered him to be soft and lenient in his speech. In fact, Allāh *taʿālā* even specified what words he should utter. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

اِذْهَبْ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ اِنَّهٗ طَغٰى، فَقُلْ هَلْ لَّكَ اِلٰى اَنْ تَزَكّٰى، وَاَهْدِيَكَ اِلٰى رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشٰى.

Go to Pharaoh, for he has certainly transgressed. Then say to him: "Are you desirous of being purified? And that I show you the path to your Sustainer so that you may then fear [Him]?"[1]

In the same way, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was taught the various ways of teaching and propagating on every occasion. This is why I say that the Qur'ān does not restrict itself to explaining the objectives. Rather, it explains the procedures of conveying them as well. Allāh *taʿālā* did not leave it to our discretion to choose whichever method we like in the field of rectification and training. The greatest of Sufis and the most erudite scholar will have to subjugate themselves to the texts for the sake of rectification. They will have to adopt the methodologies of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* and remain subservient to them. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī *raḥimahullāh* writes:

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[1] Sūrah an-Nāziʿāt, 79: 17-19.

> The one who invites towards Allāh *taʿālā* and people turn to him will have to do what the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* did. This is because he is their muqallid (follower) in this regard. He is not on his own.[1]

Etiquette of enjoining good and forbidding evil

We now take the honour of quoting a few etiquette of enjoining good and forbidding evil as explained by Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *raḥimahullāh*.

(1) When enjoining good, a person should advise in privacy if privacy is more appropriate.

(2) Enjoining good must be for the sake of acquiring Allāh's pleasure and with the intention of elevating Dīn. It must not be for one's self aggrandizement.

(3) It is essential for the person who is enjoining good to be an ʿālim because an ignorant person cannot enjoin good and forbid evil.

(4) Enjoining good must be done in a soft and affectionate manner. The person must not be stern and hard-hearted.

(5) If a person experiences any hardship because of enjoining good, he must exercise patience and be forbearing.

(6) One of the etiquette which applies to the one who enjoins good is for him to practise what he preaches so that he may not be criticized for not doing what he preaches. Allāh *taʿālā* relates the statement of Hadrat Shuʿayb *ʿalayhis salām* which he made to his people:

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[1] *Tafhīmāt*.

وَمَا اُرِيْدُ اَنْ اُخَالِفَكُمْ اِلٰى مَا اَنْهٰكُمْ عَنْهُ

I do not want to go against you in what I am forbidding you from.

In other words, I myself practise on whatever I instruct you to do. I am not treading a particular path while directing you to a different path.

Allāh *taʿālā* teaches softness and leniency by saying:

وَقُوْلُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

Speak to people in a good way.[1]

The essence of this is that when you speak to people, speak in a soft manner, with a smiling mien and an open heart irrespective of whether the addressee is righteous or not, follows the Sunnat or not. Yes, there must be no flattery in matters of Dīn and the truth must not be concealed on account of this.

When Allāh *taʿālā* sent Ḥaḍrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām* and Ḥaḍrat Hārūn *ʿalayhis salām* to Pharaoh, he advised them thus:

قُوْلَا لَهٗ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا

Address him in a soft manner.

Those who are speaking and inviting today are not superior to Ḥaḍrat Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām*. And no matter how evil the addressee may be, he is not worse than Pharaoh.

Talḥah ibn ʿUmar *raḥimahullāh* says that I said to the imām of tafsīr and Ḥadīth, ʿAṭā' *raḥimahullāh*:

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 83.

"People with corrupt beliefs also assemble around you, while I am quite stern. When such people come to me, I speak harshly to them." Hadrat ʿAṭā' *raḥimahullāh* said: "Do not do that because Allāh *taʿālā* said: 'Speak to people in a good way.' This includes the Jews and Christians. So no matter how evil a Muslim is, how can he not be included in this instruction?"[1]

Furthermore, Allāh *taʿālā* clearly instructed Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to pardon and overlook:

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ. وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللهِ ط إِنَّهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ.

Accustom yourself to pardon, enjoin the doing of what is good, and stay aloof from the ignorant ones. If a prompting of Satan stirs you up, seek refuge in Allāh. He alone is all-hearing, all-knowing.[2]

Instead of being angry at those who are disputing with you, you should overlook them. Perhaps they will accept your advice. Order them to do good; if they have the slightest intelligence they will accept. Turn away and remain aloof from the ignorant ones. In other words, if they act ignorantly, turn away from them. Do not get angry at them and do not bother about them. If your are incidentally stirred up by Shayṭān into becoming angry at them, seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* in order to save yourself from their evil and mischief. Surely Allāh *taʿālā* hears whatever is uttered and knows whatever crosses the heart.

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[1] Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 254 as quoted from Qurṭubī.
[2] Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 199-200.

The following at the time of anger is a most effective remedy:

اَعُوْذُ بِاللهِ السَّمِيْعِ الْعَلِيْمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ

When those who fear Allāh *taʿālā* are prompted into such thoughts by Shaytān which cause them to become angry, they retract immediately, they see the light and repulse the darkness of Satanic whisperings from their hearts. They come onto the straight path and the effects of those whisperings depart from their hearts.

On the other hand, the brothers of Shaytān – the unbelievers and polytheists – are drawn towards misguidance and no stone is left unturned in leading them astray.

What this means is that when a believer thinks of committing a sin, he remembers Allāh *taʿālā* and desists from that sin. The Satanic whisperings leave his heart. On the other hand, the brothers of the unbelievers – the Shayātīn – attach themselves to them, take complete control of them and immerse them in sin forever and ever.

In short, when the righteous experience heedlessness on account of Shaytān, they come to their senses immediately, they correct themselves, and the veils of heedlessness are immediately removed from them. On the other hand, the brothers of Shaytān increase in their heedlessness and disobedience.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and all the other Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* are protected from major and minor sins. It is not possible for Shaytān to influence them in any way. The words "If a prompting of Satan stirs you up" do not negate the divine protection enjoyed by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu*

ʿalayhi wa sallam. The previous verse ordered Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* to be forbearing and to overlook. The present verse states that if – due to human constraints – he is stirred up or becomes angry by the ignorance of the ignorant ones and he experiences thoughts which are opposed to the previous order, he must immediately seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* by saying: "I seek refuge in Allāh from the accursed Shayṭān." Such a thought certainly does not contradict the belief in Rasūlullāh's divine protection from sin.[1]

A comprehensive example of noble character

We now quote the explanation of Maulānā Muḥammad Is-ḥāq Ṣāḥib Kashmīrī from *ʿUmdah al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*:

This verse teaches a very concise and comprehensive teaching of noble character which Allāh *taʿālā* gives to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and to his followers. It applies especially to those who are occupied in the great work of propagating Islam. Some scholars say that while this verse discusses ethics, it encompasses all the principles of the Sharīʿat. There is no virtue or good which is not included in it. This is why it is considered to be the most comprehensive verse on noble character.

Some narrations state that when this verse was revealed, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām*: "What type of teaching is this, O Jibraʾīl?" He replied: "Your Lord is ordering you to overlook the one who transgresses against you, to give to the one who refuses you, and to join

[1] Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 3, p. 270.

ties with the one who severs them." (*Jāmiʿ al-Bayān, Maḥāsin at-Taʾwīl*)

Glory to Allāh! What a great and comprehensive teaching of noble character! If the Muslim nation of today was to adopt just this one teaching, the entire societal degeneration will come to an end and a revolution will take place in society. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone for whatever He wills and loves. He alone is the one who guides to the straight path. May Allāh *taʿālā* embellish us with noble character.[1]

Greed of the self

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهٖ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ

He who has been saved from the greed of his self, it is such who have achieved their goal.[2]

The self loves wealth and detests spending it. It is overpowered by this love and detestation. Those who act against these demands of the self are the truly successful ones.

The word *shuḥ* means miserliness and stinginess. Jauharī defines *shuḥ* as stinginess accompanied with greed (*bukhl maʿa ḥirṣ*).

A person said to Ḥaḍrat Ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu*: "I fear that I will be destroyed on the day of Resurrection." Ḥaḍrat Ibn Masʿūd *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked: "What is the matter? Why do you have such a fear?" He replied: "I hear Allāh *taʿālā* saying:

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[1] *ʿUmdah al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 570.
[2] Sūrah al-Ḥashr, 59: 9.

وَمَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهٖ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ

He who has been saved from the greed of his self, it is such who have achieved their goal.[1]

While I am extremely stingy; I cannot give anything." Hadrat Ibn Masʿūd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "That is not the *shuḥ* which Allāh *taʿālā* is referring to. The word *shuḥ* refers to your devouring the wealth of your brother unlawfully. Yes, you certainly have *bukhl* (stinginess) and it is also an evil."

Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said that if a person holds back his wealth then it is not *shuḥ*. *Shuḥ* is when you look at the wealth of others unlawfully and with greed.

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr said that *shuḥ* means that a person acquires unlawful wealth and does not give zakāh.

Some scholars say that *shuḥ* refers to an intense greed which causes a person to commit prohibited actions.

Ibn Zayd said that if a person abstains from taking what Allāh *taʿālā* prohibited to take, and his not giving what he was ordered to give does not cause him to be miserly, then such a person will be referred to as one "who has been saved from the greed of his self".

Hadrat Jābir ibn ʿAbdillāh narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Abstain from oppression because it will take several forms of darkness on the day of Resurrection. And abstain from *shuḥ* because it destroyed those before you. It

[1] Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 9.

was because of *shuḥ* that they killed each other and made the unlawful lawful."[1]

Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "The dust that rises while in the path of Allāh *taʿālā* and the smoke of the Hell-fire will never combine in a person." (In other words, the smoke of the Hell-fire will not enter the brain of the mujāhid in whose brain dust from jihād entered). And *shuḥ* and īmān cannot be collectively found in a person's heart. (In other words, the demands of *shuḥ* negate īmān).[2]

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī *raḥimahullāh* writes in his tafsīr of this verse:

وَمَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهٖ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ

He who has been saved from the greed of his self, it is such who have achieved their goal.[3]

In other words, his self has developed such magnanimity that love for wealth and attachment to all apart from Allāh *taʿālā* are not found in it, then understand that such a person has succeeded.

Allāh *taʿālā* uses the passive form "He who has been saved" to demonstrate that saving and protecting a person is not for the person to do but for Allāh *taʿālā*. It is Allāh *taʿālā* who is saving you, so do not be proud over your striving. Allāh *taʿālā* has taken it upon Himself to convey you to your objective. Continue striving for as long as miserliness and greed are present in you. Do not rest for a single

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[1] Narrated by Muslim and Aḥmad.
[2] Narrated by Baghawī and Nasa'ī as quoted in *Tafsīr Maẓharī*, vol. 11, p. 411.
[3] Sūrah al-Ḥashr, 59: 9.

moment. The self is naturally avaricious. It will never agree to giving up something unless it can hanker after something greater. This is why the next verse creates a hankering and greed for the bounties of the Hereafter. In this way, the self will give up its greed for worldly things.

اِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضَاعِفْهُ

If you give to Allāh a goodly loan He will multiply it.

Another verse states:

اَضْعَافًا كَثِيْرَةً

He will multiply it many times.

The Hadīth states that a reward can be multiplied 700 times.

We learn from the above that greed is not totally and absolutely blameworthy. Rather, there are two types of greed. Greed for all besides Allāh *taʿālā* is blameworthy while greed for Allāh's bounties and favours is praiseworthy.

وَاللّٰهُ شَكُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ

Allāh is most grateful and forbearing.

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ

Allāh knows the unseen and the seen.

He is fully aware of who is sincere, who is ostentatious and who is proud about his actions. He is also all-mighty – He crushes the pride of the proud ones. Sometimes there is a delay in the punishment for ostentation and egotism. This is based on His wisdom. He is all-wise; there is wisdom in whatever

He does. There is wisdom in the delay of the punishment.[1]

The Qur'ān is easy

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَّكِرْ

We have certainly made the Qur'ān easy to acquire admonition from it. Since it is an easy Book, there should be no need for long drawn out sciences and knowledge. Nonetheless, many sciences are required for its understanding. What, then, is the meaning of this verse?

The answer to this is that by attaching the condition of *li adh-dhikr* (for admonition) to the words "We made the Qur'ān easy", attention is drawn to the fact that the Qur'ān has been made easy for memorization and for taking admonition from its themes. Every learned, ignoramus, junior and senior person can obtain equal benefit from it. It does not necessarily mean that the rulings, injunctions and derivations of the Qur'ān are just as easy. This is an independent and difficult science on its own which can come in the lot of only distinguished 'ulamā' who devote their entire lives to the Qur'ān. This is not the field for everyone.[2]

Muftī Taqī 'Uthmānī writes in *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*:

The verses of the Qur'ān are of two types. Those which contain general words of advice, admonitory lessons and themes of admonition. For example, the

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[1] Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8, p. 139.
[2] *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8, p. 230.

fruitlessness of this world, descriptions of Paradise and Hell, points which create concern for the Hereafter, and other straightforward incidents and facts of life. This type is undoubtedly easy and anyone who has knowledge of Arabic can understand them and take admonition from them. In fact, this objective can – to a certain extent – also be achieved from reliable translations of the Qur'ān. The verse under discussion makes reference to this objective. The words *li adh-dhikr* highlight this reality.

On the other hand, the second type of verses are those which contain injunctions, rules, regulations, beliefs and academic discussions. It is not for every person to fully comprehend verses of this nature and to extract and derive rulings and injunctions from them. It will only be possible when a person acquires firmness and insight into the Islamic sciences.

It is with reference to this second type of verses that it is said that many sciences are required for a true understanding of the Qur'ān.[1]

The words of the Qur'ān

We now take the opportunity of quoting the explanations of certain words of the Qur'ān from *Tafsīrī Nukāt* of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. Allāh willing, these will prove to be most enlightening and informative for the reader and for those treading the path.

Sharh-e-sadr

Sharh-e-sadr or shaqq-e-sadr is from among the special things which are given to a Prophet. This special rank was presented to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu*

[1] *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān.*

ʿalayhi wa sallam by Allāh *taʿālā*. Shaqq-e-sadr means that the chest is cut open, cleansed and purified of human grime, and illuminated with īmān and wisdom. It is gauged from certain narrations that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* experienced this even before the incident of the Miʿrāj. After collating all the narrations in this regard, we learn that this condition was experienced by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* on five occasions. The first time was when he was four or five years old and under the care of Hadrat Halīmah Saʿdīyyah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā*. The second time was when he was ten years old. The third time was when he reached the age of twenty. The fourth time was when Hadrat Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* brought revelation to him for the first time. The fifth time was on the occasion of Miʿrāj.

We are of the view that the correct terminology for shaqq-e-sadr is sharh-e-sadr as mentioned in *Saḥīḥ Muslim* (Bāb al-Isrā') in the narration of Hadrat Mālik ibn Saʿsaʿah:

فشرح صدري إلى كذا وكذا

My chest was opened from here to there.

A sūrah of the Qur'ān makes reference to this as mentioned in Tirmidhī:

اَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ. وَوَضَعْنَا عَنْكَ وِزْرَكَ. الَّذِيْ اَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ.

Did We not open your chest? And removed from you your burden? Which had weighed down your back?[1]

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[1] Sūrah al-Inshirāh, 94: 1-3.

The explanation of sharḥ-e-ṣadr and opening of the chest which is contained in authentic Aḥādīth contain the general terminology of shaqq-e-ṣadr. In other words, while in a dream or in a state of wakefulness, the angels came and cut open Rasūlullāh's blessed chest, washed it with zam zam water, and filled it with īmān and wisdom in a golden tray. His chest was then resealed.[1]

If this incident is taken as an obvious reality, then it is totally clear that Rasūlullāh's blessed chest was cut open, his heart was washed with zam zam water and filled with īmān and wisdom. If it is taken as a similitude, we will still have to accept this fact that his chest was filled with pure īmān and wisdom. No matter what, the reality of sharḥ-e-ṣadr is that it is a divine bestowal of īmān and wisdom because the Qur'ān states in Sūrah az-Zumar:

اَفَمَنْ شَرَحَ اللّٰهُ صَدْرَهٗ لِلْاِسْلَامِ فَهُوَ عَلٰى نُوْرٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ

The one whom Allāh opened his chest to the religion of Islam, he is in illumination from his Sustainer.[2]

Opening the chest for Islam means that the reality of Islam was so much expounded to him that he had full conviction in the truthfulness of Islam, and he acquired total satisfaction on this conviction. Consequently, he has acquired Allāh's light at every step of his way towards his destination. This is the reality of sharḥ-e-ṣadr. The increase or decrease in the light will differ according to the levels and ranks.[3]

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[1] Bukhārī and Muslim (Abwāb Miʿrāj).
[2] Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 22.
[3] *Tafsīrī Nukāt*, vol. 1, p. 270.

Tazkiyah

The Qur'ān repeatedly says in praise of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*:

وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

He purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom.

Two words in this verse need to be considered. One is to purify – which the Qur'ān refers to as *tazkiyah*, and the other is *hikmat* or wisdom.

The literal meaning of *tazkiyah* is to clean, purify, remove dirt and grime. The Qur'ān uses this word in the sense that man's carnal self must be cleansed of all impurities and filth, and made clean and pure. In other words, the rust of this mirror must be removed, and it must be cleaned and polished.

وَنَفْسٍ وَّمَا سَوّٰهَا. فَاَلْهَمَهَا فُجُوْرَهَا وَتَقْوٰهَا. قَدْ اَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكّٰهَا. وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسّٰهَا.

By the soul and as He proportioned it. He then inspired it with the understanding of evil and righteousness. He who purified it has indeed achieved his goal. He who leaves it buried in the dust has indeed failed.[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* says elsewhere:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكّٰى وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلّٰى.

[1] Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 7-10.

Successful indeed is the one who purified himself, remembered the name of his Lord, and performed salāh.

In another place, Allāh *taʿālā* refers to the consequence of the call to Islam with the words *tazkiyah* and *tazakkā*.

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلّٰى. اَنْ جَاءَهُ الْاَعْمٰى. وَمَا يُدْرِيْكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَّكّٰى. اَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرٰى.

He frowned and turned away because there came to him the blind man. What do you know? Perhaps he will purify himself. Or he may have pondered and the pondering may have benefited him.[1]

We will be able to gauge the sense of the word *tazkiyah* from the above verses – that same word which is considered to be a speciality of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.[2]

Raham

Raham is from among the fundamental characteristics of man. We do good to each other without thinking of any compensation. If we were to examine this deeply, we will conclude that the feeling of raham (mercy) was working from within. The person who does not have an iota of this mercy will treat others mercilessly, wrongly, hard-heartedly, sternly and harshly. This is why Islamic ethical teachings give special importance to mercy.

From all the special names of Allāh *taʿālā*, the name Rahmān is the most important and well-known after

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[1] Sūrah ʿAbasa, 80: 1-4.
[2] *Tafsīrī Nukāt*, vol. 1, p. 286.

the name “Allāh”. With it is His other name, Raḥīm. The Qur’ān mentions the first as a status of Allāh *taʿālā* and the other as His attribute.

The kind relationship which we establish with each other is known as silah raḥmī (maintaining ties of kinship). All our family ties are based on the raḥim (womb) of the mother. The words raḥim and raḥmān (which is Allāh’s name) are derived from the same root. What this means is that the desire to maintain family ties is a manifestation of the mercy of the Merciful Allāh. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

الرحم شجنة من الرحمن.

Raḥim is a branch from Raḥmān.

In other words, the feelings of mercy and kindness towards relatives stem from the Raḥmān – the Merciful Allāh. All acts of mercy are branches of Raḥmān.[1]

Akhlāq

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ. الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ.

Successful indeed are the believers. Who are humble in their salāh.[2]

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* taught that character is even more important than worship. Akhlāq refers to huqūq al-ʿibād, i.e. the mutual dealings and relationships among humans. Worship

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[1] *Tafsīrī Nukāt*, vol. 1, p. 293.
[2] Sūrah al-Muʾminūn, 23: 1-2.

refers to huqūqullāh, i.e. the obligation which we owe to Allāh *taʿālā*. Allāh *taʿālā* is the most merciful of those who show mercy. His door of mercy is never closed to anyone – the good and the bad. He stated that every sin apart from polytheism and kufr is eligible for pardon in accordance with His will. As for shortcomings in the rights of fellow humans, i.e. the ethical obligations, their pardon is not in Allāh's hands. Instead, He placed it in the hands of His servants – those against whom injustices and wrongs were committed.

Some Aḥādīth state that after īmān, the edifice of Islam is based on ṣalāh, fasting, ḥajj and zakāh. Some people may misconstrue this and think that there is no place for noble character in this edifice. This misunderstanding is made worse by the incorrect lectures of certain ignorant lecturers. In actual fact, apart from other important objectives, one objective of these acts of worship is to develop and perfect noble character. This point is clearly highlighted everywhere in the Qur'ān. For example, the Qur'ān says that ṣalāh prevents a person from evil, fasting teaches him piety, zakāh is a full lesson in concern for fellow humans, and ḥajj gives various ethical lessons in different ways. It is also a means of helping others.

The point which becomes clear from the above is that no matter what names are given to these four pillars of Islam, character-development is included among their fundamental objectives. If these spiritual and ethical fruits are not born out of these acts of worship, we can conclude that these injunctions of Allāh *taʿālā* are merely fulfilled in name, and are completely devoid of the essence of worship – like a tree which bears no fruit, a fruit which has no

fragrance, and an outer form which is devoid of a soul.[1]

Silah rahmī

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قُلْ لَّا اَسْئَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ اَجْرًا اِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبٰى.

Say: I do not ask you for any wage for this except love with relatives.[2]

The fulfilling of rights of relatives is referred to as *waṣl raḥim* in the Arabic language. The opposite of it is *qaṭʿ-e-raḥim*. Relationships based on the womb of the mother stem from qarābat (close family ties). It is the core by which two people become partners in maintaining mutual ties, having love for each other and helping each other. This partnership expresses itself on the basis of being of the same age, studying in the same class, being in the same company, having similar interests, doing the same job, coming from the same hometown, and belonging to the same community.

In order to maintain this partnership on love and keep it strong, it is obligatory on both partners to consider certain rights and fulfil the obligations of love. However, the greatest partnership from all the above-mentioned partnerships is the one which stems from the womb of the mother. It is a bond which has been tied by Allāh *taʿālā* Himself and cannot be untied by man. This is why it is most necessary for man to consider and uphold its rights. Those who try to break this natural bond of love are

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[1] *Tafsīrī Nukāt*, vol. 1, p. 480.
[2] Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 23.

classified as evil doers, and those who are gone astray:

وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهٖٓ إِلَّا الْفٰسِقِيْنَ. اَلَّذِيْنَ يَنْقُضُوْنَ عَهْدَ اللهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مِيْثَاقِهٖ ۠ وَيَقْطَعُوْنَ مَآ أَمَرَ اللهُ بِهٖٓ أَنْ يُّوْصَلَ.

He does not lead astray by this example except the evil-doers. Who break the covenant of Allāh after its strengthening, and sever that which Allāh has ordered to be joined.[1]

A few Qur'ānic terms

During my trip to South Africa, I had the opportunity of meeting Ḥaḍrat ʿAllāmah Khālid Maḥmūd Sāḥib *dāmat barakātuhum* at the Johannesburg airport on 28 Ṣafar al-Muẓaffar 1438 A.H./29 November 2016. The ʿAllāmah uttered most loving and encouraging words which were a source of tranquillity for me. He mentioned some of his written works and also gave a few to me via a certain relative. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards. I read these books which are most certainly treasure houses of sciences and knowledge. One of them is titled *Āthār at-Tanzīl* in two volumes. One of its chapters titled *Iṣṭilāḥāt Qur'ān* (Qur'ānic terms) contains explanations of the words īmān, kufr, nifāq and so on. I found them to be in line with the subject matter of *Ḥāyāt al-Qulūb*. I take the opportunity of making sections of it a part of this book. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

الحمد لله وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى، اما بعد!

[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 26-27.

The experts of every science have their own peculiar terms and terminologies. There are also terms which are peculiar to nations and eras. The Qur'ān is a great academic treasure-house, and it too has its own original terms.

The Qur'ān is a voluminous book in which many themes are running concurrently. It contains signs of countless realities and expositions of several principles. You will find many words used in different contexts but conveying the same reality. Those realities are their original meanings, and it is from them that the terminologies of the Qur'ān are established. The different forms of the words point to a specific Qur'ānic objective and – in the process – they become the terminologies of the Qur'ān. In explaining these words, knowledge of the Arabic language only is not enough. It requires a deep understanding of Qur'ānic usage.

We have to see for what realities the Qur'ān uses those words, and if a word is used in its literal sense, then does it affect its Sharʿī reality or not. The context will show that this is a linguistic use and that the Sharʿī reality is a reality on its own. This reality is spread over various contexts but remains the same. Sometimes a reality and its demands come to the fore in different forms. These different terms of the Qur'ān are the fundamental terminologies which are essential for every student of the Qur'ān.

The Arabs in the era of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* were fully aware of the complications of words and they had no problem in understanding them not withstanding the different levels of rhetoric. They were not in the habit of playing around with words for the understanding of meanings. They neither had the rationalizations of the Romans nor

the formalities of the Persians. Under the training of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, the Qur'ān settled down correctly and perfectly in their hearts. The meaning and import of every word would be grasped clearly by their simple and clear minds. They would decipher the fundamental objective of the Qur'ān merely by listening to it. The linguistic use of a word and then its Sharʿī reality did not cause any confusion to them. There were very few occasions in which they asked Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* for the meaning of certain words.

The Muslims after the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* experienced Roman and Iranian cultures. Some Muslims tried to observe the eternal truths of the Qur'ān in the light of those cultures. Then some people followed a path of atheism as regards Qur'ānic teachings. Eventually, some of the fundamental realities of Islam took on the form of contentious issues.

In the light of the above conditions, a need was felt to explain some of the Qur'ānic terminologies to the students, and to apprise them of incorrect views with regard to each terminology. The erudite 'ulamā' of the different eras felt a need for this, and made reference to it in their commentaries of the Qur'ān and the Hadīth. Some of these realities in the light of what they explained are presented to you.

May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them with the best of rewards. Inspiration is from Him alone. Only His help is sought, and reliance is placed in Him alone.

Īmān

The linguistic meaning of īmān is "conviction" and "to believe". Its Sharʿī reality is that man must accept all the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa*

sallam as correct and true. There could be differences as to whether a certain point is established from Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* or not. However, those which are established from him with conviction and an uninterrupted chain, it is essential to affirm them for the realization of Sharʿī īmān. Rejecting even a single one is enough to prevent a person from entering the circle of īmān.

Some things are narrated in general terms from Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It is enough to believe in them in general terms. As for those which are narrated in specific terms, it is essential for a believer to affirm them in detail. A person cannot be a believer if he does not eternally believe in all the teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* irrespective of whether they are fundamental or subsidiary, creedal or practical, ethical or legal. This is the Sharʿī reality of īmān around which the injunctions of īmān revolve. (For example, when a believer passes away, his estate can be given to believers only. An unbeliever cannot be given from the estate of a believer. The same applies to marriage. A believing woman cannot be given in marriage to a non-Muslim. The janāzah of a believer is the responsibility of Muslims. At the same time, it is not permissible for Muslims to perform the janāzah of a non-Muslim). There are many other injunctions of this nature.

In order to embrace īmān, it is necessary to affirm all the teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Īmān has the prerequisite of plurality but this is not the case with kufr. What this means is that if a person rejects even one thing of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he becomes a kāfir provided that one thing is proven with certainty from

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The points which were essential for a person to be termed a believer in the time of the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* are the same today. It cannot be that it was essential for the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* to believe in ten things, while today a person believes in just nine and calls himself a believer. If īmān enters a person, it will have to enter in its entirety. If not, it will not enter at all. The Sharʿī reality of īmān is the same for everyone. There is no exception in this regard.

Ḥaḍrat Shaykh al-Hind *raḥimahullāh* writes:

> It is not possible to compartmentalize īmān. A person who rejects even some of the injunctions will be an outright kāfir. He cannot be anything by his īmān in only a few injunctions.

There can be no additions and subtractions to īmān. Yes, there can be differences in the strength and weakness of each person's īmān on the basis of the level of his conviction. Nonetheless, its Sharʿī reality is one under every condition, and this is the differentiating point between Islam and kufr.

Īmān has certain actions and signs, and ups and downs continually occur in this regard. Some of them are left out not because of rejection of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* but due to practical laziness. These actions and signs of īmān are required, but they are not its Sharʿī reality; they are its requirements. In some places, the Qur'ān uses the word īmān for these actions. This is a figurative usage of the Sharīʿat in which īmān is a combination of an affirmation and action. Increase and decrease in īmān continually takes place in this regard.

Then there are some signs of īmān, e.g. when Muslims say *as-salāmu ʿalaykum* to each other. These signs are mere indications of real īmān, and not īmān in themselves. The Qur'ān sometimes refers to these signs as īmān when the reality of īmān is not known. This will also be a figurative usage of the Sharīʿat which will only apply for as long as the reality of īmān is not known. In order to conceal their corrupt beliefs, atheists sometimes resort to these actions and signs of īmān as proofs of their īmān. Whereas, once the reality is learnt, actions and signs are not considered at all. When coming across such situations, it is the duty of every student of the Qur'ān to bear in mind these fundamental differences of the Qur'ānic usages. The linguistic meaning of the word *mu'min* will only be in the sense of believing. This meaning is also found in the Qur'ān but it is not the terminology of the Qur'ān. It will be taken in its linguistic sense. For example:

وَمَا اَنْتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَّنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صٰدِقِيْنَ

You will not believe us even though we are speaking the truth.

This is the linguistic reality of īmān. If you want to understand the Sharʿī meaning of īmān, then observe the following verse:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ حَتّٰى يُحَكِّمُوْكَ فِيْمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ

By your Sustainer! They will not be believers until they recognize you alone to be the judge in the dispute which arises among them.[1]

[1] Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 65.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ

Surely those who believed and did good deeds.

Here, the Shar'ī reality of īmān is intended. Actions/deeds are joined to it but separate from it.

In the following verse, an action is referred to as īmān:

وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيُضِيْعَ اِيْمَانَكُمْ

Allāh will not allow your īmān to go to waste.

In this context, the word īmān refers to salāh. This action is referred to as īmān. It is a figurative usage of the Sharī'at. In this īmān (which is a combination of affirmation and action), you get an increase and decrease in actions. But it is impossible for an increase and decrease in the Shar'ī reality of īmān – if there is īmān, it will be in full. If not, there will be nothing, and it will be a state of kufr.

Now observe a few points through which īmān is recognized and identified:

وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا لِمَنْ اَلْقٰى اِلَيْكُمُ السَّلٰمَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا

Do not say to the one who offered you salām, "You are not a believer."

This verse teaches us that saying *as-salāmu 'alaykum* is a sign of īmān. It is not the reality of īmān – the context of this verse bears testimony to this fact. Once the reality is gauged, the sign will not be considered.

To confuse the actions and signs of īmān with the reality of īmān, and to furnish the signs of īmān as proofs of real īmān – all this stems from failure to

recognize the different usages and contexts of the Qur'ān. There is a place for each usage, while the Shar'ī reality remains in its place, and regarding which there can be no doubt, or increase and decrease.

مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِيْ مَا الْكِتٰبُ وَلَا الْاِيْمَانُ وَلٰكِنْ جَعَلْنٰهُ نُوْرًا

You did not know what the Book is nor what īmān is. However, We placed this light...[1]

In the above verse, the word īmān refers to the details of actions. It most certainly does not refer to īmān in itself. This is because Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* can never be without īmān at any given time. We cannot even say that he did not know what īmān was. (We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* from such beliefs).

The same definition of Shar'ī īmān is related from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* – i.e. to accept all his teachings to be true. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يشهدوا أن لا إله إلا الله، ويؤمنوا بي وبما جئت به.[2]

People are not safe until they testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh, and they believe in me and in all my teachings.

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[1] Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 52.

[2] صحيح مسلم، ج ١، ص ٣٧.

Īmān and Islam

Īmān is an action of the heart while Islam refers to its external submission. However, in the definition of the Sharīʿat, īmān and Islam are one. The one who is not a believer is not a Muslim, and the one who is not a Muslim is not a believer. The reality of both is one. As regards the origin, it is referred to as īmān; and when the outward is considered, it is referred to as Islam.

When the Qur'ān uses these words in comparison to each other, then the real meaning of one of the two will not be considered. This is because the Sharʿī reality of both is the same. The difference can only be possible when one is taken in its original meaning and the other in its linguistic sense. For example:

قَالَتِ الْاَعْرَابُ اٰمَنَّا، قُلْ لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوْا وَلٰكِنْ قُوْلُوْا اَسْلَمْنَا.

The Bedouins say: "We have believed." Say: "You have not believed." Rather, you should say: "We have become Muslims."[1]

The real meaning of Islam is not intended here. Imām Bukhārī *raḥimahullāh* writes:

إذا لم يكن الإسلام على الحقيقة وكان على الاستسلام أو الخوف من القتل بقوله تعالى: قَالَتِ الْاَعْرَابُ اٰمَنَّا، قُلْ لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوْا وَلٰكِنْ قُوْلُوْا اَسْلَمْنَا. فإذا كان على الحقيقة فهو على قوله جل ذكره: اِنَّ الدِّيْنَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ الْاِسْلَامُ.

When Islam is not in its real meaning and it is merely on the basis of submission or fear of being killed, based on the words of Allāh: "The Bedouins say: "We

[1] Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 14.

have believed." Say: "You have not believed." Rather, you should say: "We have become Muslims." If the real meaning of Islam is intended, it will be as per the words of Allāh: Surely the true religion in the sight of Allāh is Islam.

If īmān is confined to the heart only, then the dealings and transactions which a believer has to carry out will not be carried out because no one can fathom what is in the heart. For example:

لَا تُنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنُوْا

Do not marry polytheists until they believe.

This verse issues the order that women should be given in marriage only to believers. In this context, if īmān is restricted to an action of the heart, it will not be possible to practise on this verse. If īmān and Islam are understood as a reality, then this verse can certainly be practised upon.

In the famous Ḥadīth of Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām*, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* gave two different answers for īmān and Islam. However, when the delegation of ʿAbd al-Qays came to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, then the explanation of īmān which he gave to them was the explanation of Islam which he gave to Ḥaḍrat Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām*.

ما الإيمان بالله وحده، قالوا الله ورسوله أعلم، قال شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله، وأن محمدا رسول الله، وإقام الصلوة، وإيتاء الزكوة، وصيام رمضان. الحديث.[1]

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[1] صحيح البخاري، ج ١، ص ١٣.

What is the meaning of īmān in Allāh alone?" They replied: "Allāh and His Messenger know best." He said: "It means testifying that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh and that Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger, establishing ṣalāh, paying zakāh, fasting in Ramaḍān…

We learn from this that the difference between the two is only in consideration, while the reality of both is one. When one is absent, the other is no longer considered.

Kufr

In order to fully understand īmān, something about kufr will have to be understood because:

لأن الأشياء تعرف بأضدادها

The reality of things is learnt through their opposites.

The linguistic meaning of kufr is "to conceal" and "to reject". The word *kufrān* means ingratitude. The Qur'ān states:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَاَزِيْدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ اِنَّ عَذَابِيْ لَشَدِيْدٌ

If you are grateful I will give you more. If you are ungrateful, My punishment is certainly severe.[1]

In the above verse, the word kufr is in the meaning of ingratitude. Allāh *taʿālā* says elsewhere:

قُتِلَ الْاِنْسَانُ مَآ اَكْفَرَهُ، مِنْ اَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ

May man perish! How ungrateful he is! From what did He create him?[1]

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[1] Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 27.

The Sharʿī reality of kufr

The reality of kufr in the Sharīʿat is to reject any of the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. To differ with any of his teaching which is reported through khabar-e-wāhid (a single narration) does not entail rejection because it is not proven on the level of conviction. Yes, it is most certainly kufr to reject any of his teaching which is proven on the level of conviction.

Whether it is an open and outright rejection or a heretical rejection, the ruling for both is the same. The rejection could be out of obstinacy – like the kufr of Abū Jahal – or it could be heretical rejection like the kufr of Musaylamah and the kufr of Mirzā Ahmad Qādiyānī. Because this too eventually stems from rejecting some of the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In the same way, kufr which is concealed while īmān is displayed outwardly is also kufr although its well-known name is nifāq (hypocrisy). The same can be said of the kufr which comes after īmān. Its well-known name is irtidād (apostasy). As for the people of the Book, although they enjoy certain concessions, they are also included among the people of kufr. Thus, people of the Book, a hypocrite, an apostate, an atheist, and an outright kāfir – these are all different forms of kufr. No matter what the form of rejection, all entail kufr. It is not necessary for a person to change his religion to turn away from Islam. It is also not necessary to reject all the teachings of Islam. Whether it is a rejection of an essential of Islam or a heretical rejection, it is enough to include a person in the circle of kufr. Yes, leaving out a practical action

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[1] Sūrah ʿAbasa, 80: 17-18.

is a defect and shortcoming in a person, it is not rejection. Rejection in any form is kufr.

Imām Muḥammad *raḥimahullāh* said:

من أنكر شيئا من شرائع الإسلام فقد أبطل قول لا إله إلا الله

The one who rejects any of the salient features of Islam has invalidated his statement of Lā Ilāha Illallāh.[1]

We will not say that he left out just one point. Rather, his leaving out the one point will be considered to be an invalidator of his entire claim to Islam.

Dīn

In the Qur'ān, the word Dīn is used to convey several meanings. Sometimes it is used in its linguistic sense, and sometimes in its original Sharʿī usage. From here, its Sharʿī definition is established. Sometimes it is used in its original meaning together with all its details. No matter what, its original meaning and its demands are never on the same scale. Neither do the different meanings of Dīn become the different parts of Dīn through which the sum total of Dīn could be made. The different parts are equal to each other, while the details and demands are like subsidiaries of the original. The fundamental reality of Dīn is one and has always been one. All the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* have been partners in this regard, and this has been the central point of the history of prophet-hood. Yes, its details may have differed in different times, and its demands may have taken different directions

[1] *Siyar Kabīr*, vol. 4, p. 365.

according to different conditions and situations. Nevertheless, its original reality remained the same and is defined as Dīn. As regards its conditions, strength and weakness could develop in it, but it can neither be broken down into parts, nor is it a combination of different parts.

It is most unfortunate that some people took the different meanings of Dīn in the Qur'ān to refer to different parts of Dīn and consider the combination of all to be the reality of Dīn. If their view was accepted, it would mean that the different usages of the word Dīn have been found defective with respect to its original meaning, and that the reality of Dīn is what is acquired from the combination of all these parts. This is certainly not the case. Wherever the word Dīn is mentioned in the Qur'ān, then in its context it is the correct meaning of Dīn. This, notwithstanding the fact that in some places only the linguistic meaning is required, in some the Shar'ī meaning, and in some the demands of Dīn is intended. No matter what, it is complete and perfect in each usage of the Qur'ān.

The linguistic meaning of Dīn is to bow down and submit. In its sultanate, Islam makes only two demands on its opponents:

1. They embrace Islam and they will enjoy the same rights as all Muslims.
2. They accept the rule of Islam, and they will receive the rights of non-Muslim minorities. However, they will not enjoy total freedom.

Jihād is not prescribed to put an end to kufr, it is there to break the power of kufr or to put a stop to the oppressions which are imposed on the oppressed.

In this regard, the Qur'ān uses the root words *dāna yadīnu* in their linguistic meaning:

وَلَا يَدِيْنُوْنَ دِيْنَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ حَتّٰى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَّدٍ وَّهُمْ صٰغِرُوْنَ.

…[continue waging jihād against those] who do not embrace the true religion from amongst those who are the people of the Book until they pay the jizyah [exemption tax] by their own hands while being subdued.[1]

Abū 'Ubaydah explains the words *wa lā yadīnūna* (who do not embrace) as follows:

لا يطيعون طاعة أهل الإسلام وكل من كان في سلطان ملك فهو على دينه وقد دان له وخضع.[٢]

They do not accept obedience to Islam. Whoever is under the rule of a king, he is on his dīn – he has submitted before him and subjugated himself to him.

Hāfiz Ibn Jarīr Tabarī *rahimahullāh* writes:

كل مطيع ملك أو ذا سلطان فهو دائن له، يقال منه دان فلان لفلان فهو يدين له دينا.[٣]

Anyone who is under a king or ruler has submitted before him. The words dāna yadīnu mean that he is subdued before him.

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 29.

[2] البحر المحيط، ج ٥، ص ٢٩.

[3] ابن جرير، ج ١٠، ص ٦٨.

In the verse under discussion, the words *lā yadīnūna* are in their linguistic meaning while the words *Dīn al-haq* are in the Sharʿī meaning.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

الكيس من دان نفسه وعمل لما بعد الموت[1]

An intelligent person is he who subdues his self and does deeds for what is to come after death.

The reality of Dīn and its Sharʿī meaning

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الدِّيْنِ مَا وَصّٰى بِهٖ نُوْحًا وَّالَّذِيْٓ اَوْحَيْنَآ اِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهٖٓ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَمُوْسٰى وَعِيْسٰى، اَنْ اَقِيْمُوا الدِّيْنَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوْا فِيْهِ، كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ مَا تَدْعُوْهُمْ اِلَيْهِ. اَللّٰهُ يَجْتَبِيْٓ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَاۤءُ وَيَهْدِيْٓ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُّنِيْبُ.

He has placed a path for you in the religion – the very same path towards which He had ordered Nūh, and the order of which We sent to you, and the path towards which We had ordered Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and ʿĪsā – uphold the religion and do not cause divisions therein. That towards which you call the polytheists weighs heavily upon them. Allāh chooses to Himself whomever He wills and guides towards Himself he who turns to Him.[2]

This verse teaches us that the Dīn of all the Prophets has always been the same. All Prophets came into this world for the establishment of the same Dīn. All

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[1] المسند لأحمد.

[2] Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 13.

nations had to establish the same Dīn as deputies of their respective Prophets.

يجب أن يكون المراد الأمور التي لا تختلف باختلاف الشرائع وهي الإيمان بالله وملائكته وكتبه ورسله واليوم الآخر، والإيمان يوجب الإعراض عن الدنيا والإقبال على الآخرة، والسعي في مكارم الأخلاق والاحتراز عن رذائل الأحوال.[1]

Dīn refers to those matters which do not change with the changing of Sharīʿats, viz. belief in Allāh, His angels, His books, His Messengers, and the Last Day. Īmān imposes turning away from the world, focussing on the Hereafter, striving to acquire noble characteristics and abstaining from evil conditions.

Dīn involves man submitting himself totally before Allāh *taʿālā* and being at his beck and call. He must submit himself before Him in such a manner that His pleasure and success in the Hereafter become the subjects of his life. He must believe that Allāh *taʿālā* is one and He has no partner, and have the firm conviction that He alone causes profit and loss. He must believe firmly in the Hereafter and its reward and punishment. The person who acquires all this becomes extremely desirous of Allāh *taʿālā*, and he experiences true enjoyment in worshipping Him and turning to Him. Such a person does not confine salāh to a five-time purification system, adhering to its times, and so on. Rather, he considers it to be a bond of love with His creator, and he deems submitting before Him to be the greatest honour and the most joyous occasion.

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[1] التفسير الكبير، ج ٧، ص ٣٨٢.

We cannot deny the fact that he also acquires the five-time purification system, learns how to adhere to a time-table, and to be under an imām. These are the effects and fruits of salāh which are praiseworthy in themselves, but they are not the reality of salāh. The reality of salāh is that special bond which is established between a servant and Allāh *taʿālā*. It was in this sense that Hadrat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām* and all the other Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* had submitted before Allāh *taʿālā*. This was their Dīn. They were all servants before Him. No matter how elevated a rank a Prophet may enjoy, he does not come out of servitude.[1]

The demands of Dīn

The demands of Dīn were clearly manifest in the lives of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. At every turn in life, Dīn has a new demand. The teachings of those pure souls [the Prophets] left behind the effects of goodness in every chapter of life. Nonetheless, the original reality of Dīn and its demands never took on the same form. In the collective history of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* the original reality of Dīn remained highlighted, and the demands of Dīn were never the fundamental theme of their call. They always invited towards the original Dīn, while the demands came to the fore just by the way. They are not the original subject matter of daʿwat in the fruits of Dīn. The original Dīn has always been to submit before Allāh *taʿālā*, believe in reward and punishment, and to develop yearning and love for Allāh *taʿālā* in the heart.

Dīn is a requirement at all times, but practising on its demands is only required when conditions present

[1] *Āthār at-Tanzīl*, vol. 2, o. 173.

themselves before it. If you go into business, then conduct it as taught by Islam. If you join the army, fight as taught by Islam. If you gain power, then establish justice and equity in a manner that every person receives his due. However, you will be required to practise in these different fields only when you enter that field. On the other hand, the original Dīn is required and has to be practised upon at every moment of your life. It is not dependent on conditions. The demands of Dīn increase and decrease when conditions increase and decrease. The original Dīn can remain preserved even when one distances one's self from conditions.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

يوشك أن يكون خير مال المسلم غنم يتبع بها شغف الجبال ومواقع القطر يفر بدينه من الفتن.[1]

A time will come when the best wealth of a Muslim will be a few goats which he takes with him to the mountain passes and catchment areas, fleeing with his Dīn from tribulations.[2]

The correct concept of Dīn

Dīn refers to affirmation of tauhīd and conviction in the Hereafter on the prophetic call. It establishes a special bond between a servant and Allāh *taʿālā*. This is the original Dīn which has been the point of call of all the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* and their collective role.

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[1] صحيح البخاري، ج ١، ص ٧.

[2] *Āthār at-Tanzīl*, vol. 2, p. 174.

Is it not our responsibility to create those specific situations in which we have to carry out the actions of Dīn so that we could practise on the injunctions which are connected to them? For example, it is the responsibility of rulers to apply the Islamic penal laws. Now in order for us to be able to apply those laws, is it not our responsibility to endeavour to establish a government? Bearing in mind this Dīnī concept, will any non-Muslim government allow Muslims to enter their country?

The answer to the above is that such an endeavour is an organizational issue. It is desirable according to situations and conditions; it is neither obligatory nor is it the fundamental call of Dīn. If the Muslims acquire power and rule, they will have to apply the injunctions which are related to it. This is obligatory on them. Allāh *taʿālā* speaks in praise of His servants as follows:

اَلَّذِيْنَ إِنْ مَّكَّنّٰهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ وَأَمَرُوْا بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ط وَلِلّٰهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُوْرِ.

Those whom, when We give them power in the land, they establish salāh, give zakāh, command good and prohibit evil. In Allāh's hands is the final outcome of all events.[1]

However, we do not find any such call in the Qur'ān that we have to strive to obtain power so that we can practise on the above-mentioned requirements. Nowhere in the Qur'ān are we encouraged to accumulate wealth so that we could give zakāh on it. Yes, if wealth is accumulated, then we are required to

[1] Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 41.

be fully observant in paying zakāh on it. It is definitely not obligatory to accumulate wealth. It is only permissible with certain conditions. Jihād is a major issue in Islam. It is the peak of Islam. Abandoning it gives out the message of humiliation, while practising on it is a sign of life. However, it is not the responsibility of the Muslim nation to create such situations where it can now practise on this injunction of jihād. Yes, if situations come up by themselves, then it is essential to respond accordingly and to give one's life for Allāh's sake. Jihād is obligatory, but it is not obligatory to create conditions for the fulfilment of this obligation. We are certainly required to offer ourselves for martyrdom when conditions present themselves, but the Qur'ān does not ask us to create conditions our selves so that we can become martyrs. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

لا تستمنوا لقاء العدو، فإذا لقيتم فاصبروا[1]

Do not hope to fight the enemy, but if you have to fight, remain firm and steadfast.

Nifāq

In addition to the unbelievers and Muslims, the Qur'ān provides many details about a third group. They are the hypocrites – they were essentially unbelievers but portrayed themselves as Muslims by deception. Although they did not become companions and friends of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, they – to a certain extent – used to intermingle with the Muslims.

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[1] صحيح البخاري، ج ١، ص ٤٤٤.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّقُوْلُ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ. يُخٰدِعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا.

Of people are some who say: "We believe in Allāh and the Last Day", yet they are definitely not believers. They deceive Allah and the believers.[1]

At this point we are faced with a delicate situation. Since nifāq is an internal condition which refers to expressing Islam and concealing kufr, and it is a hidden thing, we could assume with regard to every Muslim that he is possibly not a Muslim in his heart. If we allow this bad thought to continue, the entire Muslim nation will become a suspect. The Muslim nation will not be able to move forward with the name of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. It is therefore necessary to search in the Qur'ān for certain signs of the hypocrites through which the true Muslims are not thrown into suspicion. There have to be some Muslims who sit in the company of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and regarding whom we can say with certainty that they are believers, and that they are the genuine companions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

In the very beginning of the Qur'ān we find details about the hypocrites:

وَإِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمْ اٰمِنُوْا كَمَآ اٰمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوْٓا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَآ اٰمَنَ السُّفَهَآءُ

When it is said to them: "Believe as all the people have believed", they say: "Should we believe as the fools have believed?"[1]

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 8-9.

We learn from the above that even before the hypocrites' claim to Islam, there was certainly a group of Muslims whose Islam was well known and who were the standard for the Muslims who came later on. The hypocrites' creeping within the ranks of true Muslims came after that. Those who were the first to embrace Islam will certainly be accepted as Muslims. They were people like Hadrat Abū Bakr, Hadrat ʿUthmān, Hadrat ʿAlī, Hadrat Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās, Hadrat ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿAuf, Hadrat Talhah, Hadrat Zubayr, Hadrat Bilāl *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* and others. Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was the 40th person to embrace Islam, and Sūrah al-Mu'min is the 40th sūrah of the Qur'ān.

It becomes clear from the above that these early pioneers have no taint of hypocrisy. They were Muslims and believers in the true sense of the word. Had this not been the case, the Qur'ān would not have made their īmān an example for others. To relate the hypocrites' claims to īmān in this sequence and to make the pioneers the criterion of īmān for those who came later demonstrates that those who embraced īmān in the beginning were genuine believers of the highest level.[2]

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a cogent proof and evidence. (compiler)

During this same journey of mine to South Africa, Maulānā Dāwūd Sāhib gifted me a valuable book titled *Tafsīr Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* of Hadrat Maulānā Husayn ʿAlī *rahimahullāh*. I found some of its themes to be in line with the subject matter of this book. I therefore take the opportunity of quoting the

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 13.
[2] *Āthār at-Tanzīl*, vol. 2, p. 176.

following topics: Islāh Jabbārīyyat, Islāh Rabt al-Qalb and Islāh Mas'alah-e-Ināb at.

Islāh Jabbārīyyat

Allāh *taʿālā* gave man a heart, eyes and ears to understand, see and listen to the truth. He commissioned the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* to explain the truth and He sent Books to them. If a person still does not understand the truth, does not see it and does not listen to it; and instead opposes it out of his stubbornness and obstinacy, and remains wilful on his false beliefs and polytheistic practices, then the ability of such people to listen to the truth and understand it is obliterated from them. The inspiration to embrace īmān is taken away from them. This condition is known as qahr jabbārīyyat (the force of compulsion). This is not jabr (compulsion) because jabr is when a person is not even given the ability to understand the truth, and the means to recognize the truth are not provided to him.

The Qur'ān explains this concept in various ways:

(1)

لَهُمْ قُلُوْبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُوْنَ بِهَا ز وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُوْنَ بِهَا ز وَلَهُمْ اٰذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُوْنَ بِهَا ط أُولٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ط أُولٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغٰفِلُوْنَ.

They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. They are like animals. In fact, they are farther astray. It is they who are heedless.[1]

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[1] Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 179.

This verse does not attribute this condition of theirs to any cause.

(2)

This condition (force of compulsion) is sometimes attributed to their false beliefs and polytheistic practices. For example:

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ

No such thing. Rather, that which they were earning has covered their hearts with rust.[1]

Sometimes the condition is attributed to the polytheists themselves.

وَقَالُوْا قُلُوْبُنَا فِيْٓ اَكِنَّةٍ مِّمَّا تَدْعُوْنَا اِلَيْهِ وَفِيْٓ اٰذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ وَّمِنْ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ حِجَابٌ، فَاعْمَلْ اِنَّنَا عٰمِلُوْنَ.

They say: "Our hearts are in covers from that towards which you call us. There is a weight in our ears, and there is a veil between you and us. So you do your work and we will continue with ours.[2]

(3)

Sometimes it is attributed to Allāh *taʿālā* because He is the real doer and the creator of man's actions.

خَتَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ وَعَلٰى سَمْعِهِمْ ؕ وَعَلٰٓى اَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ ۫ وَّلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ.

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[1] Sūrah al-Muṭaffifīn, 83: 14.
[2] Sūrah Hā Mīm Sajdah, 41: 5.

Allāh has set a seal on their hearts and on their ears; and on their eyes is a veil. And for them is a mighty punishment.[1]

وَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْاٰنَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْآخِرَةِ حِجَابًا مَّسْتُوْرًا.

When you recite the Qur'ān, We place between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter an invisible barrier.[2]

أُولٰئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ طَبَعَ اللهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ وَسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۚ وَأُولٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغٰفِلُوْنَ.

It is these upon whose hearts, ears and eyes Allāh set a seal. And it is they who are heedless.[3]

The reason for these different approaches is so that the addressee may learn what is intended by the seal of compulsion, why and when it is set, and who sets the seal. The first, second and third - each of these is in sequence.

Sometimes the Qur'ān explains the nature of the seal of compulsion, but the reasons for it are not explained. This is because only a description of the condition is intended, as in the case with:

خَتَمَ اللهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ

Allāh has set a seal on their hearts…

Sometimes, the reasons are also mentioned:

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[1] Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 7.
[2] Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 45.
[3] Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 108.

ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْاٰخِرَةِ ۙ وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ. أُولٰئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ طَبَعَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ وَسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ.

This is because they preferred the life of this world over the Hereafter. And because Allāh does not guide the unbelieving people. It is these upon whose hearts, ears and eyes Allāh set a seal.[1]

This can be explained through an example. A person is in the early stages of suffering from tuberculosis. A very professional and affectionate doctor gives him medication for free and says to him: "Take this medicine immediately or else your condition will worsen and it will become incurable." The patient totally disregards the doctor's advice and does not take the medicine. Or, when he is forced to take it, he spits it out. His condition worsens to the extent that the doctor informs him that it is now incurable. There is nothing but death now. Obviously, it was no fault of the doctor. If anyone was at fault, it was none other than the patient. The unbelievers and polytheists on whose hearts the seal of compulsion is set are just like this patient.

Iṣlāḥ Rabṭ al-Qalb

Rabṭ al-Qalb (strengthening of the heart) is the opposite of qahr jabbārīyyat (force of compulsion). When a person chooses the path of guidance, and he becomes firm in the obedience of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, Allāh *taʿālā* blesses his heart with firm conviction and his īmān with steadfastness. Consequently, he is protected against deviation and misguidance. This condition of

[1] Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 107-108.

the heart is known as rabṯ al-qalb. The Ḥadīth makes reference to the Muslims who participated in the Battle of Badr, and the statement of Allāh *taʿālā* is quoted therein:

اعملوا ما شئتم قد غفرت لكم

You may do as you like, I have forgiven you.

This statement makes reference to the same condition of the heart described above. It means: I have caused your hearts to incline towards Me. I filled your hearts with love for virtue and detestation of evil. Now you cannot even go towards sin.

Several verses of the Qur'ān make reference to this condition. Allāh *taʿālā* says with regard to the youth of the cave:

وَّرَبَطْنَا عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوْا فَقَالُوْا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَّدْعُوَاْ مِنْ دُوْنِهِ إِلٰهًا لَّقَدْ قُلْنَآ إِذًا شَطَطًا.

We strengthened their hearts when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will never invoke anyone as a deity apart from Him. [Or else] we would have said something that exceeds the bounds of reason."[1]

Rabṯ al-qalb is actually the fourth level of hidāyat (guidance). There are four levels of hidāyat:

(1) Inābat: That is, to turn to Allāh *taʿālā*. To abandon stubbornness and obstinacy and to search for guidance. Guidance is only given to those who have the yearning to turn to Allāh *taʿālā*.

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[1] Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 14.

وَيَهْدِيْ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُّنِيْبُ

In other words, Allāh *taʿālā* only guides those who turn to Him.

(2) Hidāyat: To find the straight path. This is acquired after turning to Allāh *taʿālā*.

(3) Istiqāmat: After guidance comes steadfastness. When a person begins to tread the straight path in accordance with Allāh's guidance, Allāh *taʿālā* confers him with steadfastness. Reference to this is made in the following verse:

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا رَبُّنَا اللّٰهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوْا

Surely those who said: "Our Lord is Allāh" and then remained steadfast.

(4) Rabṭ al-qalb: After steadfastness on the path of guidance, a person acquires the level of rabṭ al-qalb. This is the highest level of firmness in īmān and conviction. If a person acquires it, there is no force in this world that can cause him to give up īmān and Islam. This level can never be achieved without Allāh's guidance and complete following of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Iṣlāḥ Mas'alah-e-Inābat

After studying the Qur'ān we learn that the issue of tauḥīd is understood only when there is no stubbornness, obstinacy and fanaticism in the heart; and a person has an inclination for the truth. The following verses of the Qur'ān bear testimony to this.

وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ اِلَّا مَنْ يُّنِيْبُ

In other words, none accepts the issue of tauhīd and benefits from it except the one who has the quality of inābat (turning to Allāh *taʿālā*) in his heart and has no obstinacy within him.

This is supported by the following verse of Sūrah Qāf:

اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَذِكْرٰى لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهٗ قَلْبٌ اَوْ اَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيْدٌ.

In this there is a [time of] contemplation for him who has a heart or who listens attentively.[1]

هٰذَا مَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ لِكُلِّ اَوَّابٍ حَفِيْظٍ مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمٰنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيْبٍ.

This is what you had been promised – to every one who remained penitent, kept remembering [Allāh]. Who feared the Merciful without seeing [Him] and came with a penitent heart.[2]

قُلْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَهْدِيْ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ اَنَابَ

Say: Allāh leads astray whomever He wills and guides to Himself the one who turns to Him.

This is supported by the following verse:

هٰذَا بَلٰغٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيُنْذَرُوْا بِهٖ وَلِيَعْلَمُوْآ اَنَّمَا هُوَ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ وَّلِيَذَّكَّرَ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ.

This is a message to mankind so that they may be warned by it, and so that they may know that He

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[1] Sūrah Qāf, 50: 37.
[2] Sūrah Qāf, 50: 32-33.

alone is the one Allāh, and so that the intelligent ones may reflect.[1]

اَللّٰهُ يَجْتَبِيْ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ وَيَهْدِيْ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُّنِيْبُ

Allāh chooses to Himself whomever He wills and guides towards Himself he who turns to Him.[2]

If the same meaning is taken in the words "a guide for the righteous ones" – i.e. the Qur'ān is a guide for those who have the quality of inābat in them, there remains no need for any objections, questions and answers.

فِطْرَةَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِيْ فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيْلَ لِخَلْقِ اللّٰهِ، ذٰلِكَ الدِّيْنُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ. مُنِيْبِيْنَ اِلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوْهُ وَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ.

The natural disposition which Allāh instilled into mankind. There is no change in the creation of Allāh. This is the true religion but most people do not understand. All turning to Him. Continue fearing Him, establish salāh and do not be of the polytheists.[3]

We learn from the above verses that the issue of tauhīd is understood only by those who have in their hearts the quality of turning towards the truth. As for those who are bent on their polytheistic beliefs, or accept tauhīd but do not express it – they are unable to understand the reality of this issue.[4]

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[1] Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 52.
[2] Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 13.
[3] Sūrah ar-Rūm, 30: 30-31.
[4] *Tafsīr Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p. 8.

Allāh-fearing ʿulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that the ʿulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. Only those ʿulamā' will be the true heirs who have embellished themselves with the internal and external excellences of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. They possess external knowledge and internal spiritual knowledge. They adhere to the injunctions of the Sharīʿat and have imbibed the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, many auliyā' and ʿulamā' were born to the ummat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who were the heirs of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* in the true sense of the word.

Towards the latter centuries, the ʿulamā' of Deoband are certainly the flag-bearers of knowledge, cognition, practice and sincerity. After the revolution of the 12th century of the Hijrah, Dīnī madāris were deserted and the khānqāhs had fallen silent. The traces of Islamic culture were being wiped out. The darkness of ignorance and misguidance was spreading. Polytheism, innovations and atheism had raised their heads. The Allāh-fearing ʿulamā' who stood up during these turbulent times, fulfilled the right of inheritance of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and fulfilled the duty of reforming and rectifying the Muslim nation most certainly have to be congratulated. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

من تمسك بسنتي عند فساد امتي فله أجر مائة شهيد

The one who adheres to my Sunnat at a time when corruption spreads in my ummat shall receive the reward of 100 martyrs.

By the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, after the physical jihād of 1857, the heirs of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* and the Allāh-fearing ʿulamā' commenced jihād with the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. This first manifested itself in the form of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, this centre of learning enjoys great success to this day.

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Marghūb ar-Raḥmān Ṣāḥib Lājpaurī writes in *Dhikr aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn* with reference to Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband:

> Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad Yāsīn Ṣāḥib *raḥimahullāh* used to say:
>
> We experienced that era in Dār al-ʿUlūm when every single person from the errand boy to the principal was a man of affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* and a walī of Allāh *taʿālā*. During the day, various sciences and branches of knowledge were taught, while the nights were spent in the remembrance of Allāh *taʿālā* and reverberated with the recitation of the Qur'ān.[1]

Note: These personalities undoubtedly combined knowledge with practice. They were embodiments of the internal and external sciences. They followed the Qur'ān, Sunnat and the ways of the pious predecessors. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* created so many dār al-ʿulūms in the world from this single Dār al-ʿUlūm. The entire world is enlightened through the light of its personalities. Together with correct knowledge and understanding, these elders possessed the qualities of love for Allāh *taʿālā*,

[1] *Dhikr aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn*, vol. 2, p. 23.

affinity with Him, and fear and submission before Him. By virtue of His kindness and affection, Allāh *taʿālā* blessed these personalities with internal and external bounties, and took immense Dīnī and academic services from them. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

We learn from this that mere external knowledge is not enough to be able to do any work. Rather, it requires correct knowledge and proper thinking. Without this, the fundamental and real work of Dīn cannot be done. Ḥadrat Maulānā Rafīʿ ad-Dīn Ṣāḥib Dehlawī *raḥimahullāh*, the righteous heir of Ḥadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Ṣāḥib Muḥaddith Dehlawī *raḥimahullāh*, writes:

> Practising on the view of every scholar results in confusion and disorder because every scholar does not possess correct understanding and correct perception. (How then can such ʿulamā' do Dīnī works!?)[1]

Through the blessings of these Allāh-conscious ʿulamā', I can say that let alone every scholar not having correct understanding and perception, there are many who do not even have correct beliefs. How can we then expect any Dīnī, Islamic and moral services from them?

All those who are affiliated to the genuine ʿulamā' and Sufis are duty-bound to speak and write in the light of correct knowledge, correct understanding, with intelligence, and in accordance with the Qur'ān and Sunnat. In addition to this, if they bear in mind the lives of the pious predecessors, then – Allāh

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[1] *Risālah Bayʿat*, p. 27.

willing – they will acquire the goodness of this world and the Hereafter – which is most essential is this era of misguidance and ignorance. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone. (compiler)

The law of recompense

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* said:

Deeds, the reward for deeds and Allāh's law of recompense are all found in the Qur'ān. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

O Muslims! This is neither confined to you nor is it confined to the people of the Book (who have made many great claims). It is Our divine law:

مَنْ يَّعْمَلْ سُوْءً يُّجْزَ بِهٖ

Whoever commits an evil will be given recompense for it.

Whether it be of weakness, shortcomings, heedlessness, treachery, disloyalty, causing differences, lack of good deeds, worship of wealth, worship of authority – Allāh *taʿālā* has a consequence and a result for it. He has a recompense for all this. There is no concession and no exception in this regard.

This theme is explained in the Qur'ān – explicitly in some places and implicitly in others. The Qur'ān relates stories of nations, kingdoms and mighty tyrants. It also relates stories of weak and oppressed peoples.[1]

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[1] *Qur'ānī Ifādāt*, p. 461.

To this point you read themes related to actions, conditions and ethics. We will now present the recompense for them.

Rewards for good deeds

In the Qur'ān, Allāh *taʿālā* makes extensive mention of the good deeds of His servants. That is, their internal and external acts of obedience. In like manner, He gives them glad tidings of a pure life in this world, rewards, His pleasure, forgiveness, admission into Paradise and so on for the doing of these good deeds. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَالذّٰكِرِيْنَ اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا وَّالذّٰكِرٰتِ، اَعَدَّ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةً وَّاَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا

The men who remember Allāh abundantly and the women who remember [Allāh abundantly] – Allāh has set aside for them forgiveness and a great reward.[1]

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ اَوْ اُنْثٰى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ اَجْرَهُمْ بِاَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ.

Whoever did good, be it man or woman, and is a believer, to him We will give a good life. We will grant them their reward for the good deeds which they used to do.[2]

Punishment for disobedience

In like manner, Allāh *taʿālā* makes mention of the unbelief, polytheism, and internal and external sins of the unbelievers; and threatens them with His

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[1] Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 35.
[2] Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 97.

curse, intense displeasure, and destruction in this world and the Hereafter. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَاَمَّا مَنْ طَغٰى وَاٰثَرَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا فَاِنَّ الْجَحِيْمَ هِيَ الْمَاْوٰى

As for the one who rebelled and gave preference to the worldly life, the blazing fire is his abode.

وَمَنْ اَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِيْ فَاِنَّ لَهٗ مَعِيْشَةً ضَنْكًا وَّنَحْشُرُهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ اَعْمٰى.

Whoever turns away from My remembrance, for him is a life of constriction, and on the day of Resurrection We shall raise him up blind.[1]

Our ʿulamā' devoted entire books to the subject of recompense. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Ṣāḥib Muḥaddith Dehlawī *raḥimahullāh* wrote a most enlightening article on this subject in his magnum opus, *Ḥujjatullāh al-Bālighah*. It is explained by Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muftī Saʿīd Aḥmad Ṣāḥib Pālanpūrī in *Raḥmatullāhi al-Wāsiʿah*. It is quoted below.

The five forms of recompense

There are five forms of recompense in this world:

1. Spiritual recompense. It is also known as internal recompense. In other words, joy and tranquillity are experienced in the heart on account of good deeds. And restlessness and agitation is experienced because of evil deeds. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَمَنْ اَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِيْ فَاِنَّ لَهٗ مَعِيْشَةً ضَنْكًا.

Whoever turns away from My remembrance, for him is a life of constriction.[1]

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[1] Sūrah Ṭā Hā, 20: 124.

Hadrat Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* writes:

The constriction in this world is with regard to the heart. Out of his greed for the world, the person is constantly worried about how he can progress in it. And he is agitated over the fear of loss. Even if an unbeliever has no worries, his condition most of the time is as described previously. The condition of a righteous believer is the opposite of this.

2. Bodily recompense. For example, the removal of illnesses because of doing good deeds, the deferment of illnesses and calamities on account of charity. Falling ill because of evil deeds, become stricken by grief, being overcome by fear and so on. When the Kaʿbah was being constructed before Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* could be conferred with prophet-hood, he and his uncle, Hadrat ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* were carrying rocks for the construction. His uncle advised him to remove his lower garment (lūngī) and place it on his shoulders. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was about to do this when he immediately fell to the ground and he stared blankly towards the sky. He asked for his lūngī and re-fastened it.[2] This incident is an example of bodily recompense.

3. Recompense to people and things which are connected to the person. For example, blessings in one's life, wealth and family on account of good deeds; and suffering losses in these things on account of evil deeds.

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[1] Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 124.

[2] *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Hajj, Bāb Fadl Makkah, Hadīth 1582.

4. Natural recompense. In other words, angels, people in general and other creations having love for righteous people, and evil people suffering on account of sins.

5. Recompense in actions. A person gets more inspiration to do good on account of his good deeds. And the withdrawal of this inspiration on account of bad deeds, and falling into additional sin until a seal is set on the heart. These are the respective recompenses for good and evil. There are two forms of this recompense: (1) A person is inspired to do more good or whisperings from Shaytān increase. (2) Changes take place in the person's conditions. That is, he experiences such conditions whereby he progresses in good deeds or inclines towards evils.[1]

Remember the consequences of actions

The famous Hadīth expert Hadrat Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* wrote a letter to Nawāb Murtadā Khān Shaykh Farīd who was a dignitary in the Moghul court and a paymaster during the rule of Shāh Jahān. In his letter, he wrote three pieces of advice, one of which was: "Be mindful of the consequences of actions."

I feel it would be appropriate to quote the entire letter for further enlightenment. He writes:

1. Develop a genuine quest.
2. Be vigilant about the consequences of actions.
3. Develop a mix between the external and the internal.

He explains a genuine quest as follows:

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[1] *Rahmatullāhi al-Wāsi'ah.*

> A quest overtakes and overwhelms a seeker in such a way that nothing can stop him from reaching his objective and wish. His enthusiasm and restlessness reach such a level that even if all the intelligentsia of the world were to get together and tell him that it is impossible for him to realize his objective and that it is difficult for him to acquire it, he pays no heed whatsoever to them.

There is no place whatsoever for idleness. Do whatever you can. Do not consider any action to be insignificant. Allāh *taʿālā* has appointed a reward for every action.

فَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَّرَهُ. وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَّرَهُ.

Whoever does an iota of good shall see it. Whoever does an iota of evil shall see it.[1]

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* wrote a book on the subject of recompense. It is titled *Jazā' al-Aʿmāl* (the recompense for deeds). It is a most comprehensive work. We are quoting its introduction and eleven sections of its first chapter.

Introduction to *Jazā' al-Aʿmāl*

Actions are causes of reward and punishment. This is mentioned in the Qur'ān under various themes. In some places, action is specified as a prerequisite and consequence of recompense:

فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَنْ مَّا نُهُوْا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُوْنُوْا قِرَدَةً خسِئِيْنَ

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[1] *Hayāt Shaykh ʿAbd al-Haq Muhaddith Dehlawī*, p. 254.

Then when they exceeded the limits in that which they were prohibited from, We decreed: Become apes, detested.[1]

It is clear from the above that they received this punishment because of their transgression.

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَلَمَّآ اٰسَفُوْنَا انْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ

When they displeased Us, We exacted revenge from them.

This clearly shows that displeasing Allāh *taʿālā* was the cause of revenge.

اِنْ تَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَّيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ

If you fear Allāh, He will decree in your favour and expiate from you your sins.

وَاَنْ لَّوِ اسْتَقَامُوْا عَلَى الطَّرِيْقَةِ لَاَسْقَيْنٰهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا

Had they remained steadfast on the path, We would have given them abundant water to drink.

فَاِنْ تَابُوْا وَاَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ فَاِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ

If they repent, establish salāh and pay zakah, they are your brothers in religion.

In some places, Allāh *taʿālā* uses the *bā' sababīyyah* (the letter *bā'* which is used to show reason or cause).

ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ اَيْدِيْكُمْ

[1] Sūrah al-Aʿrāf, 7: 166.

This punishment is because of the actions which your hands sent forth.

بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ

This punishment is because of what you used to do.

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا

This is because they rejected Our signs.

In some places, Allāh *taʿālā* uses the *fā' sababīyyah* (the letter *fā'* which is used to show reason or cause).

فَعَصَوْا رَسُوْلَ رَبِّهِمْ فَاَخَذَهُمْ

They disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord so He seized them.

فَكَذَّبُوْا بِهِمَا فَكَانُوْا مِنَ الْمُهْلَكِيْنَ

They belied Mūsā and Hārūn ʿalayhimas salām so they became of those who were destroyed.

In some places, the words *Lau lā* (had it not been) are used.

فَلَوْ لَا اَنَّهٗ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِيْنَ لَلَبِثَ فِيْ بَطْنِهٖٓ اِلٰى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُوْنَ

Had Yūnus ʿalayhis salām not been from among those who glorify Allāh, he would have remained in the belly of the fish until the day of Resurrection.

This clear shows that he was released on account of his glorification of Allāh *taʿālā*.

Sometimes the word *Lau* is used:

وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوْا مَا يُوْعَظُوْنَ بِهٖ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ

Had they done what they were advised to do, it would have been better for them.

All the above verses explicitly demonstrate that there is a definite relationship between actions and recompense.

Muḥammad Ashraf ʿAlī

I now quote the first chapter of *Jazā' al-Aʿmāl* from which the religious and worldly harms of sinning will be learnt. Study it carefully and abstain from sins so that you are protected against Allāh's punishment and wrath.

Chapter one

This chapter explains the worldly harms of sinning. The harms are so many that they cannot be counted. Nonetheless, we will first quote a few Qur'ānic verses and Aḥādīth, and then some details will be provided. We all know the many stories of the disobedient peoples in the Qur'ān and the punishments which are mentioned with them. What was it that caused Iblīs to be flung out of Paradise and thrown down to earth? It was his disobedience on account of which he became cursed, his external features were distorted, his internal self was destroyed, instead of mercy he received curses, and instead of proximity to Allāh *taʿālā* he was distanced from Him. Instead of glorifying and extolling Allāh *taʿālā*, he resorted to unbelief, polytheism, lies and immorality.

What was the thing which caused all the people of the world to be drowned during the time of Ḥaḍrat Nūḥ *ʿalayhis salām*? What caused a tornado to strike the ʿĀd nation to the extent that they were flung to the ground and killed? What caused a screeching sound to descend on the Thamūd nation which resulted in their kidneys bursting forth and all of

them being destroyed? What caused the people of Hadrat Lūṭ *ʿalayhis salām* to be raised to the skies, turned upside down, flung back to earth, and stones being pelted at them? What caused a punishment in the form of a cloud to hover over the people of Hadrat Shuʿayb *ʿalayhis salām* and for fire to rain down upon them? What caused the people of Pharaoh to be drowned in the Red Sea? What caused Qārūn to be swallowed into the earth together with his house and treasures? What caused a certain martial nation to overpower the Banī Isrāʾīl, enter their homes and utterly destroy them? And for another nation which was their enemy to overwhelm them and destroy all that they had built? What caused various types of calamities to strike the Banī Isrāʾīl – sometimes death, sometimes imprisonment, sometimes their houses were overturned, sometimes tyrant kings ruled over them, sometimes they were expelled from their homelands?

What was it that caused all this? If it was not disobedience then what else could it be? These stories are related repeatedly, and the reason is given in very concise words:

وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوْا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ

Allāh is not such as to wrong them. Rather, they wronged their own selves.

Look at all the losses which these nations had to suffer in this very world because of their sins.

Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* says that when Qabrus was conquered, Jubayr ibn Nadīr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* saw Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* sitting one side and crying. He relates: I asked him: "O Abū Dardā'! What is the reason for crying on such a

blessed say in which Allāh *taʿālā* gave honour to Islam and the Muslims!?" He replied: "O Jubayr! I am quite disappointed that you do not understand. Do you know how disgraced and valueless a nation becomes in Allāh's sight when it disregards His orders! Look at this nation [which we defeated] which was just recently in power. It disregarded Allāh's orders so it was defeated and disgraced. You are seeing this right before your eyes."

A narration of the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad *raḥimahullāh* states that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

إن الرجل ليحرم الرزق بالذنب يصيبه

A person is deprived of sustenance on account of a sin which he commits.

Ibn Mājah *raḥimahullāh* narrates from ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUmar *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* who said: We were ten people sitting before Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He turned to us and said: There are five things, I seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā* if you were to experience them. (1) When immoral acts are committed openly and publicly by a people, they will experience plagues and seized by illnesses which their early generations never heard of. (2) When they cheat in weighing and measuring, they will experience droughts, poverty and tyrant rulers. (3) When a nation stops paying zakāh, the rains of mercy will be shut off from it. Had it not been for the animals, they would not receive a single drop of rain. (4) When a people break their covenants and promises, Allāh will cause their enemies to overpower them and take their wealth and properties by force…

Ibn Abī ad-Dunyā narrates that a person asked Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* the reason for an earthquake. She replied: "When people commit adultery openly as though it were a permissible act, consume alcohol and play musical instruments; then Allāh *taʿālā* is overcome by self-respect and orders the earth to shake the people."

Hadrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *rahimahullāh* would repeatedly issue the following decree in the city:

After praising Allāh *taʿālā* and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. You are warned that an earthquake is a sign of divine punishment. I have written a decree to all the cities for its inhabitants to go out onto the open field on such and such date for the sake of praying to Allāh *taʿālā* and beseeching Him. The one who has the wealth must also give in charity. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكّٰى وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهٖ فَصَلّٰى

Successful indeed is the one who purified himself, remembered the name of his Lord, and performed salāh.

And supplicate as Hadrat Ādam *ʿalayhis salām* supplicated:

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا اَنْفُسَنَا وَاِنْ لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ

O our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and show mercy to us, we will certainly be from among the losers.

And supplicate as Hadrat Nūh *ʿalayhis salām* supplicated:

وَاِنْ لَّا تَغْفِرْ لِيْ وَتَرْحَمْنِيْ اَكُنْ مِّنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ

If You do not forgive me and show mercy to me, I will be from among the losers.

And supplicate as Hadrat Yūnus *ʿalayhis salām* supplicated:

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ سُبْحٰنَكَ اِنِّيْ كُنْتُ مِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ

There is none worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You. I was certainly from among the wrongdoers.

Ibn Abī ad-Dunyā narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "When Allāh *taʿālā* decides to exact revenge from His servants, children die in large numbers and women become barren."

Mālik ibn Dīnār *raḥimahullāh* said: I read in the books of wisdom that Allāh *taʿālā* says: "I am Allāh. I am the king of kings. Their hearts are under My control. When a person is obedient to Me, I cause the king's heart to be merciful towards him. When a person is disobedient to Me, I cause the kings to be oppressive towards him. Do not occupy yourselves in speaking ill of the kings. You should rather turn to Me and I will make them lenient towards you."

Imām Ahmad *raḥimahullāh* narrates from Wahb who said that Allāh *taʿālā* said to the Banī Isrāʾīl: "When I am obeyed, I am pleased. I send down My blessings which are unlimited. When I am disobeyed, I become angry. I send My curses whose effects last for seven generations."

Imām Ahmad *raḥimahullāh* narrates from Wakīʿ *raḥimahullāh* who said that Hadrat ʿĀʾishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* wrote a letter to Hadrat Muʿāwiyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* in which she said: "When a person acts against the orders of Allāh *taʿālā* then instead of

people praising him, they criticize and disparage him."

There are many other Aḥādīth and statements of the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* in which the worldly harms of sinning are mentioned. Some of the harms are now mentioned in detail and in sequence. In order to make it easy to understand, I have divided this chapter into sections.[1]

Section 1

One of the effects of sinning is that a person is deprived of knowledge. Knowledge is an internal light which is extinguished by sins. Imām Mālik *raḥimahullāh* had advised Imām Shāfiʿī *raḥimahullāh* as follows:

إني أرى الله تعالى قد ألقى على قلبك نورا فلا تطفئه بظلمة المعصية

I see that Allāh taʿālā has placed a light in your heart. Now do not extinguish it with the darkness of sin.

Section 2

Sinning results in a decrease in one's sustenance. A Ḥadīth in this regard was quoted previously.

Section 3

A sinner experiences a type of dread towards Allāh *taʿālā*. This is a point which can be understood by a person who has the slightest inclination. A person complained to a Sufi that he was experiencing dread. The Sufi replied:

إذا كنت قد وحشتك الذنوب – فدعا إذا شئت واستأنس

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[1] There are 27 sections of which we are quoting 11. (compiler)

If sins have caused you to experience dread, give them up and you will experience affinity [with Allāh taʿālā].

Section 4

Sinning causes a person to feel dread towards fellow humans as well, especially towards pious and righteous people. His heart is not inclined to sitting in their company. The more his dread increases, the more distant he becomes towards them, and the more deprived he becomes of their blessings. A pious elder said: "If I happen to commit a sin, I experience its effect in the attitude of my wife and animals. They are not totally obedient to me."

Section 5

A sinner experiences difficulties and obstacles in most of his dealings. Just as the paths of success are opened on account of piety, discarding piety causes the paths to become closed up.

Section 6

A sinner feels a type of darkness in his heart. If he ponders over this a little in his heart, he will perceive this darkness clearly. The force of this darkness results in a state of confusion and perplexity which causes the person to fall into innovations, deviation, ignorance and eventual destruction. The effect of the darkness of the heart then comes onto the person's eyes and spreads across his face which is then seen by everyone. No matter how handsome and beautiful a flagrant sinner may be, a condition of darkness is certainly visible on his face.

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: Piety results in effulgence on the face, light in the heart, expansion in sustenance, strength in the body, and love in the hearts of people towards the person.

Sin causes the face to lose its effulgence, darkness in the grave and heart, lethargy in the body, constriction in sustenance, and hatred in the hearts of people towards the person.

Section 7

Sinning causes weakness in the heart and body. The weakness of the heart is obvious in the sense that the person's enthusiasm for good works decreases until it becomes non-existent. As for the weakness of the body, we know that it is subservient to the heart. If the heart is weak, so will be the rest of the body. Look at how physically strong the Persians and Romans were, yet they could not stand in the face of the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Section 8

A sinner is deprived of obedience. Today he will leave out one act of obedience, tomorrow he will leave out another, on the third day he will leave out yet another one. In this way, all good deeds slip through him because of sinning. Like a person who takes one very tasty and delicious morsel of food which then causes him to become so sick that he is deprived of thousands of tasty and delicious foods.

Section 9

Sinning causes one's lifespan to shorten and its blessing is curtailed. Piety results in extension of a person's lifespan as established from authentic Aḥādīth. Shortening of a person's lifespan on account of sinning can be understood from this. The objection that one's lifespan is already decreed – how can it increase and decrease - is a very weak objection. Why apply this objection to lifespan alone? All these things – affluence, poverty, good health, illness – are decreed and one can make the same objection to

them. Despite this, we resort to measures [to remove poverty, enjoy good health, etc.]. The same can be applied to one's lifespan.

Section 10

Another harm of sinning is that one sin becomes a cause of a second sin, and a third… Gradually sins become many to the extent that the sinner is immersed in them. Secondly, constant sinning becomes his habit which is then extremely difficult to give up. He then commits a sin because if he does not, it causes him pain and discomfort. Subsequently the wretched person has no enjoyment whatsoever.

Section 11

Sinning causes the will and desire for repentance to weaken until he is left with no inspiration whatsoever to repent, and dies in this condition.[1]

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* I commenced this book – *Ḥayāt al-Qulūb Fī Raḍā' al-Maḥbūb* – with themes from *Ḥayāt al-Muslimīn* of Ḥakimul Ummat Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *raḥimahullāh*, and also concluded it with themes from his work, *Jazā' al-Aʿmāl*. In-between, many Qur'ānic verses, Aḥādīth and teachings of the pious predecessors were quoted. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept them and make them beneficial for the Muslim nation. Āmīn.

Nidā'-e-Tarbīyyat is a book written by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Jāsim al-Bilālī and translated by Muftī Muḥammad Arshad Fārūqī. It contains a theme titled *Dil Kī Zindagī* (the life of the heart). I am quoting it below:

[1] *Jazā' al-Aʿmāl*, p. 208.

The life of the heart

Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Mubārak *raḥimahullāh* is one of the leaders in the science of Hadīth. He says in a few lines of poetry:

> We know that sins kill the heart and that persistence in sin results in disgrace and humiliation. And that abstaining from sins gives life to the heart. Also, disobeying your carnal self results in nothing but good.

The hearts of so many people die while moving around on earth. When the causes or means for the life of the heart come to an end, minor and major sins cause germs and viruses to attack the heart and permeate it. When a person commits a sin then, as per the statement of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, a black spot appears on the heart. When this black spot falls onto the heart, a similar size of whiteness is removed. When sins are continually committed, blackness envelopes the entire heart. The heart is then deprived of Allāh's light and the effulgence of divine revelation is removed. The heart becomes weak until it eventually dies. Just as sinning is the fundamental reason for the death of the heart, abstaining from sinning is the secret behind its life. The waning pulse comes to life again, and life spreads through every organ of the body.

The heart is not inhabited only by giving up sins. Rather, it also needs good deeds. It is similar to rain falling on fertile ground. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَآ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَآءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأَنْبَتَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍۭ بَهِيْجٍ.

You see the earth lying barren. Then no sooner We send water upon it, it stirs and swells and puts forth every type of radiant plant.[1]

There are so many dead hearts which Allāh *taʿālā* revived through the mercy of divine revelation. And how many hearts were destroyed on account of sinning, pride, laziness and lethargy. May Allāh *taʿālā* keep our hearts vibrant with the enthusiasm of obedience.[2]

Note: We learn from this that we have to carry out acts of obedience and abstain from sinning for the life of our hearts. This is incumbent on all Muslims. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us. Āmīn. (compiler)

Three cautionary points

I feel it necessary to write on three cautionary points. Observe them carefully.

First point: It is essential to know the etiquette and principles of a position before ascending to it

Every person who wishes to ascend to a certain Dīnī position must first acquire knowledge of its etiquette and principles. Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said:

تفقهوا قبل أن تسودوا[3]

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[1] Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 5.

[2] *Nidā'-e-Tarbīyyat*, p. 215.

[3] صحيح البخاري، باب الاغتباط في العلم والحكمة، ج ١، ص ٢٣.

Acquire understanding of Dīn before you take positions of leadership.

After a person becomes a leader or ascends a lofty position, shyness will prevent him from studying under anyone. He will thus be deprived of acquiring knowledge.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a valuable piece of advice given by Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. We ought to embed it in our hearts. It is related that he saw a person buying and selling, so he asked him: "Did you learn the rules and regulations of buying and selling?" The person replied: "No." Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to him: "Go and learn its rules and regulations first and then come to the market place." This applies to all departments of life. It includes education and training, establishing a bond with a Sufi shaykh, and daʿwat and tablīgh. The etiquette and rules of all these have to be learnt in order to carry them out correctly.

Hadrat Hishām *rahimahullāh* said: My father, ʿUrwah, used to assemble us and say: "O my children! Acquire knowledge because while you may be juniors today, there will come a time when you will be appointed as seniors and leaders."

Just imagine how humiliated that shaykh and senior will feel when – despite people reverting to him – he is asked a question he cannot give an answer because of his ignorance!

Hadrat Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* said:

وكل رياسة من غير علم – أذل من الجلوس على الكناسة

Leadership without knowledge is worse than sitting on a rubbish dump.

I find it most appropriate to quote an important subject which was presented by Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh*.

He said: Now that I have grown so old and there is no time to acquire anything, I have come to realize that the thing which prevents man from acquiring excellence in anything is his pride. After all, this is what prevents him from humbling himself before an expert. We get experts in every era from whom we can acquire expertise. However, this pride prevents people from humbling themselves before such experts. Consequently, they acquire nothing and remain totally ignorant. When a person leaves aside his pride and haughtiness, he is able to acquire something. There is a famous saying:

Water flows to low lying regions.

Hadrat Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* writes under the chapter *Bāb al-Hayā' Fī al-'Ilm*:

لا يتعلم العلم مستحي ولا مستكبر، وقالت عائشة رضي الله عنها نعم النساء نساء الأنصار لم يمنعهن الحياء أن يتفقهن في الدين.[1]

A shy person and a proud person cannot acquire knowledge. Hadrat 'Ā'ishah radiyallāhu 'anhā said: The Ansār women are indeed excellent. Bashfulness did not prevent them from acquiring understanding of Dīn.

Note: This statement of Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* is based on absolute wisdom and insight. It ought to spur women to study Dīn and acquire understanding of it. Women must set aside their

[1] صحيح البخاري، ج ١، ص ٢٤.

customary shyness and modesty and acquire knowledge of Dīn while preserving their chastity and purity. (compiler)

The objective of Imām Bukhārī *raḥimahullāh* is to show that modesty is undoubtedly a department of īmān and an excellent quality. Nonetheless, it must not be resorted to in situations which deprive a person from good. We learn from the above that knowledge is not possible in the presence of pride and shyness.

In the course of his *Saḥīḥ Bukhārī* lessons, Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *raḥimahullāh* used to say: In such a situation, even the shyness stems from pride, and thus prevents a person from humbling himself before an expert. In a case like this, shyness or modesty will not be a praiseworthy quality. Instead, it will be disparaged. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

Quotations from *Rasūl-e-Karīm Kī Taʿlīmī Tahrīk*

My heart desires to quote a few extracts from *Rasūl-e-Karīm Kī Taʿlīmī Taḥrīk* of Maulānā Saʿūd ʿĀlam Qāsimī on the subject of the education of women.

Teaching the Qur'ān

In one of the oldest sources of the biography of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* – the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of Ibn Is-ḥāq – we come across a narration which states that when the Qur'ān used to be revealed to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he would first recite it to the men and then to the women. We learn from this that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* considered men and women equal as regards conveying and teaching them the message of Allāh *taʿālā*.

When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* received revelation for the first time in the cave of Hirā', he returned home and related the entire incident to his wife, Hadrat Khadījah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā*.[1]

Shyness is not an obstacle to seeking knowledge

Some of the questions of the women used to be with regard to the needs and difficulties which are naturally peculiar to women. Despite this, the importance of knowledge overpowered their shame and modesty, and they used to ask the details in this regard from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Hadrat Umm Salamah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* narrates that Umm Sulaym *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* who was the mother of Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and said: "O Rasūlullāh! Allāh *taʿālā* does not shy away from saying the truth. If a woman experiences a wet-dream, does she have to take a bath?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "Yes, if she sees liquid." On hearing this, she covered her face and asked: "O Rasūlullāh! Does a woman also experience a wet-dream!?" He replied: "Yes. If this did not happen, how will a child resemble its mother?"

Special education for the pure wives of Rasūlullāh

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to pay special attention to the education and training of his pure wives. The Qur'ān too stresses this point. After according a distinguished position to them, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

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[1] *Rasūl-e-Karīm Kī Taʿlīmī Tahrīk*, p. 61.

وَاَقِمْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتِيْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَاَطِعْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ، اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ اَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيْرًا. وَاذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلٰى فِيْ بُيُوْتِكُنَّ مِنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ.

Establish salāh and continue giving zakāh, and remain in the obedience of Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh only wants to remove loathsome things from you, O family of the Prophet and to completely purify you. Remember what is recited in your homes of Allāh's words and of wisdom.[1]

In addition to practical education through his daily practices, ways and character, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to adopt certain other methods for the purification and training of his pure wives. For example, he would occasionally wake them up at night and teach them the importance of night worship and concern for the Hereafter. On one occasion, he woke them up in the following manner:

استيقظوا صواحب الحجر رب كاسية في الدنيا عارية في الآخرة.

O you in the rooms! Wake up! Many well-dressed women in this world will be naked in the Hereafter.

In other words, women who are outwardly dressed but are devoid of īmān and good deeds in this world will be under the wrath of Allāh *taʿālā* in the Hereafter. Clothing is a beautification for this world only while good deeds are a beautification for this world and the Hereafter. Therefore, give preference to the latter beautification. Another reason why this

[1] Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 33-34.

training was necessary is that the pure wives were to become examples for other women.

Imām Zuhrī *raḥimahullāh* said:

كانت عائشة رضي الله عنها أعلم الناس يسئلها الأكابر من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Ḥadrat ʿĀ'ishah raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā was the most learned. Senior Companions of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam used to ask her and benefit academically from her.

While Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was alive and even after his departure from this world, believing women used to come to his pure wives and learn from them. This is another reason why Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* gave special attention to their education and training.

Bayʿat of women

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to accept bayʿat (pledge of allegiance) from both men and women for the sake of their remaining steadfast on Islam and living their lives according to Allāh's orders. The matters for which bayʿat used to be taken from women is mentioned in the Qur'ān as follows:

يٰاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اِذَا جَآءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنٰتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلٰى اَنْ لَّا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللّٰهِ شَيْئًا وَّلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِيْنَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ اَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَاْتِيْنَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَّفْتَرِيْنَهٗ بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِنَّ وَاَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِيْنَكَ فِيْ مَعْرُوْفٍ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللّٰهَ، اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ.

O Prophet! If believing women come to you in order to pledge to you that they will not ascribe any partners

with Allāh, they will not steal, they will not commit adultery, they will not kill their children, they will not fabricate a slander between their hands and their feet, and that they will not disobey you in any good deed, then accept the pledge from them and seek forgiveness for them from Allāh. Surely Allāh is forgiving, merciful.[1]

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* says that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to accept bayʿat from women in accordance with the details of this verse.

Hadrat Umm ʿAṭīyyah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* relates that when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* arrived in Madīnah, he assembled the Anṣār women in a house and sent Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* to them so that he may accept bayʿat from them on behalf of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in line with the verse quoted above.[2]

The efforts of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the field of education and training of women bore fruit in the form of many female Hadīth experts and scholars in the Muslim nation. Hadrat Qādī Aṭ-har Mubārakpūrī *raḥimahullāh* writes in *Khawātīn Islam Kī Dīnī Wa ʿIlmī Khidmāt*:

Crowds of students attend the classes of female Hadīth experts

Students of Hadīth from distant lands used to come in droves to study Hadīth under these muḥaddithāt and shaykhāt (female Hadīth experts and scholars). They used to consider it a source of pride to relate Hadīth from these female experts. Their classes were

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[1] Sūrah al-Mumtaḥinah, 60: 12.
[2] *Rasūl-e-Karīm Kī Taʿlīmī Taḥrīk*, p. 65.

attended by not only students but also by senior male Hadīth experts.

Umm Muhammad Zaynab bint Ahmad ibn ʿUmar Maqdisīyyah used to conduct Hadīth lessons until she reached the age of 90. Hadīth students from various countries used to attend her classes. She herself travelled to many cities to conduct Hadīth lessons. Imām Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes with reference to her:

وارتحل إليها الطلبة وحدثت بمصر وبالمدينة المنورة.

Students travelled to her, while she herself conducted Hadīth lessons in Egypt and Madīnah Munawwarah.

Umm Ahmad Zaynab bint Makkī Harrānīyyah conducted Hadīth lessons while she was 94 years old. Even during this period of old age, large numbers of students used to attend her classes. Imām Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* wrote with reference to her:

وازدحم عليها الطلبة

Large crowds of students used to assemble around her.

Umm ʿAbdillāh Zaynab bint Kamāl ad-Dīn Ahmad ibn ʿAbd ar-Rahīm Maqdisīyyah was the Hadīth expert of Syria. Her entire life was spent in narrating Hadīth and teaching Hadīth books. Large numbers of students used to attend her classes. Imām Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* writes with reference to her:

وتكاثروا عليها، وتفردت وردت كتبا كبارا رحمها الله

Large numbers of students used to attend her classes. She was the sole narrator of many Aḥādīth. She taught large Ḥadīth collections.[1]

By virtue of Rasūlullāh's spiritual training and purification of the souls, many women were purified internally and spiritually who then became a means for other men and women. Qāḍī Aṭ-har Mubārakpūrī *raḥimahullāh* writes in this regard:

Rectitude and purification of the self

There were many spiritual masters among these daughters of Islam through whose pure souls the spirit of asceticism, piety, worship and spiritual exercises was blown into the women of Islam. These ardent worshippers, ascetics and female Sufis rendered sterling services among their own kind. The work of purification of the self, and moral and ethical training was undertaken in the khānqāhs. Sufism, sincerity and spirituality gushed forth from their blessed spiritual fountains.

Umm Aḥmad Zulaykhā Ghaznawīyyah was well-known by the title of al-Wāʿiẓah (the lecturer, the admonisher). She lived her life as a Sufi. She used to go to women, teach them and lecture to them. Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn Rāziyah was also known by the title of al-Wāʿiẓah. She was an ardent worshipper and Sufi. Ibn Jauzī *raḥimahullāh* writes with reference to her:

لها رباط تجتمع فيه الزاهدات

She had a khānqāh where female ascetics used to assemble.

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[1] *Khawātīn Islam Kī Dīnī Wa ʿIlmī Khidmāt*, p. 48.

Tāj an-Nisā' bint Rustum Isfahānīyyah settled down in Makkah Mukarramah and lived a life of abstention. Imām Taqī ad-Dīn Fāsī Makkī writes about her as follows:

وكانت مقدمة الصوفية بها

She was at the forefront of the Sufis of Makkah Mukarramah.

He writes with reference to Safīyyah bint Ibrāhīm who was a famous scholar and ascetic of Makkah Mukarramah:

شيخة الصوفيات خادمة الفقراء بالحرمين الشريفين

She was a shaykhah of the female Sufis and she used to see to the needs of the poor of Makkah Mukarramah and Madīnah Munawwarah.

In other words, Safīyyah bint Ibrāhīm was the mentor of the female ascetics and Sufis of the Haramayn Sharīfayn. She used to see to their rectification and training. Together with this, she used to see to the needs of the poor of these two cities.

The historians describe Zahrah bint Muhammad ibn Ahmad as a scholar, a righteous woman and a Sufi. In Damascus she had a khānqāh which was known as Ribāṭ az-Zahrah. She lived next to this khānqāh from where she used to teach and train female ascetics and Sufis.

In addition to being an expert Hadīth scholar, Fāṭimah bint Muhammad Qasṭalānīyyah Makkīyyah was a powerful Sufi. She received her spiritual training under Shaykh Najm ad-Dīn Tabrezī. She

conferred spiritual blessings and training to those who studied Ḥadīth under her.

Āsiyah Maqdisīyyah was the sister of Imām Ḥāfiẓ Diyā' ad-Dīn Maqdisī and the wife of Shaykh Majd ad-Dīn ʿĪsā. She was a well-known worshipper of her time. She had surpassed many in her religiosity, goodness and righteousness. The following is mentioned in *Kitāb al-Mushtabah* with reference to her:

من العوابد حفظت القرآن العزيز، توصف بالدين والخير والصلاح، ولها ورد، وما في زمانها مثلها.

She was from among the ardent worshippers. She memorized the Qur'ān. She was known for her religiosity, goodness and righteousness. She was regular with her daily devotions. She was a matchless woman of her time.

It becomes clear from these few examples that the daughters of Islam played a distinguished role in the various Islamic sciences and on the practical field of Islam. No department of Islamic life is devoid of them. They have a splendorous history in the field of spirituality and Sufi living. They served the spiritual needs of men and women.[1]

The piety of Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah

Ibn Abī Mulaykah relates that when Ḥaḍrat ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* was on her death-bed and was about to depart from this world, Ḥaḍrat Ibn ʿAbbās *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* sought permission to meet her. She said: "I fear he might resort to praising me." Someone said: "He is the cousin of Rasūlullāh

[1] *Khawātīn Islam Kī Dīnī Wa ʿIlmī Khidmāt*, p. 70.

sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam and is himself a very noble person (you should therefore permit him)." She said: "Okay, call him in." Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* came in and asked: "How are you?" She replied: "If I am from the righteous, than I am well." (In other words, if I am good in Allāh's sight then everything will be good). Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "Allāh willing, you will remain good. (In other words, you will have a good death). You are the pure wife of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and he did not marry any virgin woman apart from you. Your innocence was announced from the heavens (in the Qur'ān)."

After Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* left, Ibn Zubayr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* came in. Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* said: "Ibn ʿAbbās was here just now and he spoke in praise of me. I wish I was an anonymous forgotten person."[1]

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* made a bequest to Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn Zubayr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* saying: "You must not bury me with them (i.e. with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*). Instead, bury me in Baqīʿ with my co-wives. I do not want my praises to be sung together with those of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*."[2]

Note: This was the fruit of Rasūlullāh's education and training. All the Saḥābah and Saḥābiyāt had reached the station of affinity with Allāh *taʿālā* and His true recognition. The latter generations did not have even one percent of it.

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[1] *Nasr al-Bārī Sharḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 9 p. 459.
[2] *Nasr al-Bārī Sharḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 5, p. 57.

Hadrat ʿAllāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *raḥimahullāh* writes:

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* enjoyed superiority over not only women in general, the pure wives, and certain Saḥābah. Rather, apart from a few senior Saḥābah, she enjoyed superiority over all the Saḥābah. Imām Tirmidhī narrates from Hadrat Abū Mūsā Ashʿarī *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* who said: "Whenever we – Saḥābah - were faced with a complexity, we presented it to Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* and we most certainly found a solution to it by her."[1]

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah – the chief of the Sufis

Hadrat ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* was the loftiest as regards her internal spiritual condition. The Sufis speak about the station of *fanā'* (self-obliteration) which is considered to be a great achievement. The previously quoted Hadīth plus her statement

وددت أن أكون نسيًا منسيًا

I wish I was completely forgotten.

Demonstrate that she enjoyed this station to the level of perfection by virtue of the company of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

When a person reaches this level, he does not look at his own achievements and excellences. Rather, he is so conscious of his slip-ups and shortcomings that he does not bother about the peoples' praises and dispraises. Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī *raḥimahullāh* writes to his mentor, Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāḥib Muhājir Makkī *raḥimahullāh* with regard to this condition and station.

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[1] *Sīrat-e-ʿĀ'ishah*, p. 163.

Honourable Hadrat. As regards external knowledge, approximately seven years have passed since leaving you. During this period, over 200 people obtained the Hadīth certificate from me. Most of them have themselves commenced teaching Hadīth and are fully occupied in reviving the Sunnat and propagating Dīn. There is no honour greater than this provided it is accepted by Allāh *taʿālā*. As for the fruits of being in Hadrat's company, the essence of it is that in the inner recesses of my heart I do not bother about profit and loss from anyone apart from Allāh *taʿālā*. By Allāh, there are times when our mashā'ikh separate themselves from us. This is why I do not worry about the praise and dispraise of anyone, and am aloof from those who praise and those who dispraise. I have developed a natural aversion towards sin and a natural desire for obedience. This is the effect of the affinity which has reached me from the effulgence of Hadrat. It will be disrespectful and impudent to say anything more. O Allāh! Forgive me because I wrote this after receiving instruction from Hadrat.[1]

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Nānautwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said:

This knowledge has spoilt me. If not, I would have rubbed myself in the soil in such a way that no one would have recognized me.

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to recite the following couplet:

> We are disgraced when we die. We should rather drown in the sea so that neither

[1] *Makātīb Rashīdīyyah*, vol. 1, p. 16.

would our body be carried nor would we have a grave.

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* said:

To be someone is a cause of my disgrace and humiliation. My honour lies in being nothing.

Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said:

I tried to obliterate all traces of myself. Who is it who made me famous!?

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to read this couplet very often:

Ever since our insightful eyes opened, we fell from our own sight.

The following couplet of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* is a reflection of the spiritual condition of Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh*:

The fire of love burnt us. We experienced true life after our death.

Observe the following couplet of Hadrat Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh*:

Genuine honour lies in obliterating yourself and making yourself a non-entity. So if you are not a fool, choose obliteration for yourself.

Second point: Do not be proud about your large numbers

Allāh *taʿālā* reprimanded the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* for looking at their large number and powerful forces. Allāh *taʿālā* says in this regard:

إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا

…when you prided yourselves on your large numbers, but they availed you nothing…[1]

Allāh *taʿālā* brings to the attention of the mujāhidīn not to be deluded by their large numbers and military superiority. Rather, they must have full conviction that victory is solely through Allāh's help and assistance. People of understanding and intelligence do not look at the small or large numbers. Rather, they are focussed on Allāh *taʿālā*. They consider success to be solely in remaining on the path of guidance.

I consider it appropriate to quote a statement of Ḥaḍrat Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ *raḥimahullāh*. I am quoting it from *Kitāb al-Adhkār* of ʿAllāmah Muḥīy ad-Dīn Nawawī *raḥimahullāh*. Study it carefully.

الفضيل بن عياض رضي الله عنه ما معناه: اتبع طرق الهدى لا يضرك قلة السالكين. وإياك وطرق الضلالة، ولا تغتر بكثرة الهالكين. وبالله التوفيق.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyāḍ raḥimahullāh (a senior scholar and Sufi) said: Follow the paths of guidance

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[1] Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 25.

[2] كتاب الأذكار، ص ٣٤١.

and understand well that the paucity of seekers will not harm you. Save yourself from the paths of misguidance and do not be deluded by the large number of destroyed people. (i.e. do not follow them after looking at their large number).

Note: Glory to Allāh! This statement is based on absolute insight and conveys the reality. The objective is to tread the path of rectitude and guidance even if those who are treading it are few. And you have to save yourself from the path of misguidance even if those treading it are many. Throughout history, those who followed guidance and gained salvation have always been in the minority. And those who followed misguidance and falsehood, and destroyed themselves were always in the majority. Therefore, never ever follow their ways after looking at their large numbers. (compiler)

Third point: The one who is not fanatical is to be congratulated

Never ever permit fanaticism and partisanship to come onto the path whether it is tribal partisanship, national partisanship, educational fanaticism or propagational fanaticism. This causes immense personal and collective harm to the Muslim nation.

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib Muhaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* writes on the reasons why the Jews and Christians did not accept the messenger-ship of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

The reasons for it are: (1) The mutual differences in the habits and life-conditions which existed among the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. For example, some had many wives while others had less, and other similar matters. (2) Differences in their Sharīʿats. (3) Differences in Allāh's interactions with the Prophets

ʿalayhimus salām. (4) Another major reason what that Allāh *taʿālā* commissioned Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* who was from the progeny of Hadrat Ismāʿīl *ʿalayhis salām* while before this, the majority of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* were from the Banī Isrāʾīl (children of Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām*).[1]

Note: Look! One of the reasons why the Jews and Christians did not accept the messenger-ship of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was that he was from the progeny of Hadrat Ismāʿīl *ʿalayhis salām* while they were from the progeny of Hadrat Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām*. Think about it carefully. What defect does this cause in the messenger-ship of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. After all, it was a special gift of Allāh *taʿālā*. They ought to have considered it to be an act of obedience to Allāh *taʿālā* and accepted it. This would have been to their advantage. Unfortunately, when a person succumbs to ignorance, obstinacy, pride and jealousy; he becomes an enemy of common sense. In fact, he becomes an enemy of his own honour and good fortune.

It is most saddening to say that fanaticism has become most common nowadays. Somewhere it is national fanaticism, somewhere tribal fanaticism, somewhere educational and somewhere propagational. In fact, this disease has spread among the pure Sufis as well. People do not abstain from demonstrating the superiority of their spiritual lineage and denigrating the spiritual lineage of others. In fact, mutual differences are observed in one spiritual lineage among the khulafā' of the same shaykh. In addition to fanaticism, people are now

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[1] *Al-Fauz al-Kabīr*, p. 16 (translated by ʿAbd ar-Rashīd).

prone to extremism as well. This is most harmful. We seek refuge in Allāh *taʿālā*.

May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us against fanaticism, extremism and other maladies, and confer us with balance and moderation in every matter. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

Safeguarding the tongue

عن عقبة بن عامر رضي الله عنه قال قلت: يا رسول الله، ما النجاة.

قال: أملك عليك لسانك، وليسعك بيتك، وابك على خطيئتك.[1]

Hadrat ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir radiyallāhu ʿanhu asked Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam: "How will there be salvation in the Hereafter?" He replied: "Restrain your tongue, let your house suffice you, and cry over your sins."

The tongue is safeguarded because it blows away the core of īmān and becomes a cause of ill-feeling in people. The most important thing in tasawwuf is to befriend people and bring joy to them.

Hadrat ʿUqbah ibn ʿĀmir *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* asked Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* about salvation in the Hereafter and he showed him three things to do.

(1) Restrain your tongue. In other words, abstain from saying anything in which there is no good. Only say things which will be beneficial to you.

(2) Let your house suffice you. A weakness among people is that they come to their homes only to eat, drink and sleep. Other free time is wasted in

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[1] رواه الترمذي.

restaurants, shopping centres and other useless gatherings where nothing but futile activities take place. This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said that one's house must suffice one so that free time can be spent there to do something productive. If not, abstain from sin.

(3) Cry over your sins. Crying is of two types: the crying of the eyes and the crying of the heart. Real crying is crying of the heart. This means that a person must be remorseful over his sins. Such a person abstains from sinning very quickly. If there is no remorse, sins are never given up.[1]

Note: The advice to restrain the tongue is a most important piece of advice. The carelessness of the tongue generally results in many major problems. People in positions of responsibility have to be extremely cautious in this regard. They must think carefully before they say anything. A person who is occupied in delivering lectures and talks, and teaching and training must believe firmly that the position he is holding essentially belongs to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which he received as an inheritance and as a deputy. This is why we ought to convey the message of the one whose heirs we are. We must not deviate from this in the least. Understand well that the destination can be reached solely through following the Sunnat. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* conveys this in the following couplet:

> The one whose feet are not on the path of
> the Sunnat will never reach Allāh.

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[1] *Tuhfah al-Almaʿī*, vol. 6, p. 179.

Mukarram Anīs Ahmad Sāhib says in a couplet:

> Do not make any additions and subtractions to Dīn. Do only what Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* showed.

The advice to cry over one's sins is given to every member of the Muslim nation; no one is excluded from it. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

كل بني آدم خطائون وخير الخطائين التوابون

Every human is prone to error. The best are those who repent.

Every person must cry over his sins. Crying over sins is a great bounty. Our elders taught us this and encouraged towards it. Hadrat Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* composed many poems on the virtues and benefits of crying. A few couplets are quoted here:

> If the cloud does not cry, how can the garden smile? If a child does not cry, how can the milk in the breast be produced?
>
> If the son of the sweetmeat-seller did not cry, the ocean of gifts would not have flowed.

The background to the story of the sweetmeat seller's son is that a senior elder was in debt. Many of his creditors were seated in front of him in order to demand payment from him. But the elder had nothing to pay them. Suddenly a boy selling sweetmeats walked past. The senior called him and asked: "How much are your sweetmeats? Sell them to me." The boy handed the sweetmeats over to the senior. He ate some of it and fed all his creditors."

The boy then asked for the money for the sweetmeats. The senior said: "If I had the money to pay my debts, these people would not be sitting here. Now you too may sit down with them. Once I am able to, I will pay them their money and pay you yours." On hearing this, the boy began crying and said: "My father will be angry at me and he will beat me. What will I do?" Just then, a man arrived and gave to each person a bag with the person's name on it. Each bag contained the money which was owed. The boy also received a bag with his money in it. Someone asked: "Hadrat, what is this mystery? Explain it to us so that we can be at rest." He said: "Allāh *taʿālā* said that if I cry, He will fulfil my debts for me. I could not cry so I resorted to this."

Shaykh Yahyā Sulaymān al-ʿUqaylī, a distinguished scholar of the Arab world wrote a booklet titled *Siyānah al-Ikhwān Min Āfāt al-Alsun wa al-Ādhān* (safeguarding our brothers from the tribulations of the tongue and ears). Maulānā Muhammad Arshad Sāhib Fārūqī did an excellent translation of it under the title *Baulne Se Pehle Taule* (think before you speak). Although I referred to it as a booklet, it is most weighty as regards its meanings.

This entire booklet ought to be included in this book, but for the sake of brevity, I feel it will suffice to quote the first and last topics. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to benefit from it.

Objective of the booklet

This booklet serves as a reminder and advice to Muslims. The initial etiquette of education and training are presented in a new style. It emphasises on those who are occupied in propagation to

safeguard their tongues and protect themselves against slip ups and recklessness in this regard.

There are various groups which have spread on different public fields and which are engaged in the work of inviting towards Islam. This inevitably results in differences of opinion, and people holding different views and opinions. These sometimes result in heated debates. Since this spreads among the masses and on a political level with its own demands, it sometimes poses a challenge to the propagators. This is why we hear rumours, accusations and counter accusations. In such a situation, a propagator cannot adhere to the highest level of piety and the required etiquette related to his tongue and ears. He starts uttering things without thinking and begins to side with those who fabricate things. The words become harsh, debates become bitter, suspicions increase, disharmony bursts forth, and troublemaking takes the form of a Shaytān's hernia. When we observe the hastiness of present day propagators in spreading rumours and accusations, and the profusion of suspicions, we are left astounded. This is because propagators of the past were most united, safeguarded their tongues, and were most cautious about quoting the statements of all and sundry. This booklet will present some examples of errors and mistakes of the tongue, the purpose of which is to remind and to encourage our Muslims to safeguard themselves from evil. This is done so that the Islamic movement is saved from its evil consequences, and the strength of the Islamic movement is protected against destruction. Apart

from this, the harms of these evils have an effect on the īmān and piety of every person.[1]

Conclusion

The method of rectification and purification of the propagator, and the cleansing of his heart is through control over the love of his self and combating the attacks of the self. If his self is lowered and humbled to a degree, Allāh *taʿālā* will bless him with love and the people's love for him will increase. When the carnal self is retrained and the body parts are controlled, it results in tranquillity of the heart, internal purity, balanced emotions, and loftiness in character.

An indication of these lofty attributes is in the protection of the ears and restraint of the tongue. It is clear proof of success in training the self, loftiness of īmān, the presence of piety and consciousness of the Hereafter.

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاۗءُوْ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِاِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِيْنَ سَبَقُوْنَا بِالْاِيْمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِيْ قُلُوْبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا رَبَّنَآ اِنَّكَ رَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ.

[This wealth] is for those who came after them, saying: O our Sustainer! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our hearts any malice against the believers. O our Sustainer! You alone are kind, merciful.[2]

A translation of the following couplets of Muhammad Ahmad ar-Rāshid are now presented:

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[1] *Baulne Se Pehle Taule*, p. 4.
[2] Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 10.

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> We are of high value. Our methodology is laid down. Our religion and Qur'ān repeatedly prohibit us from treading the evil path. Beware! Beware! Do not be ostentatious. Your Lord knows the secrets which lie in your innermost recesses. Purify your intentions so that the fragrant fountains of goodness may gush forth. A positive outlook demands protecting the tongue from evil, saying beneficial things, giving sound advice, speaking sweetly, being cautious when quoting information; and abstaining from finding faults with others, being critical, backbiting and having evil thoughts of others.[1]

Guidelines to the daughters of Islam

Dear daughters! Think about the academic achievements of some of the female scholars which we related previously. Ḥaḍrat ʿĀ'ishah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* was, after all, also a woman. Despite this, she surpassed most of the Ṣaḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* and all the Ṣaḥābiyāt *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhunna* in her knowledge and Allāh-recognition. We mentioned this before. Furthermore, she held a distinguished position over all the Ṣaḥābiyāt and pure wives as regards her spiritual and personal excellences. This is why we referred to her as Sayyidah aṣ-Ṣūfiyah (the chief of the female Sufis). This is similar to the title which is given to Ḥaḍrat Junayd Baghdādī *raḥimahullāh* – Sayyid aṭ-Ṭā'ifah. This is the favour of Allāh *taʿālā* which He confers on whomever He wills.

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[1] *Baulne Se Pehle Taule*, p. 24.

My dear daughters and sisters! If you strive hard, acquire knowledge of the Qur'ān and Sunnat, become proficient in it, and develop piety, purity and fear of the Hereafter in your hearts; it will be to your good fortune. You will receive a lofty position from Allāh *taʿālā*. You will be conferred with bounties from Him in this world and in the Hereafter. You will receive such bounties in Paradise which – as per a Hadīth – no eye has seen, no ear has heard about, and no heart has ever imagined. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire you all. Āmīn.

Dear daughters! If you are studying the contemporary sciences, continue studying them; but at the same time acquire knowledge of the Qur'ān and Sunnat. Do not be negligent in this regard. And practise on it. In other words, imbibe the qualities of piety and fear of the Hereafter, and acquire the greatest fortunes. Never ever display any disregard towards your Dīn, īmān and Islamic culture. If not, you will have to suffer far greater losses in the Hereafter.

In order to continue this loftiest of works, the foundation of Madrasah al-ʿĀrifāt has been laid. Its construction is reaching completion. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable its completion and cause the objectives to be realized. Āmīn.

It is also my intention to initiate a programme of teaching the recitation of the Qur'ān so that this science may become common. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to do this. Āmīn.

Conclusion

A comprehensive definition of ihsān

Hadrat ʿAllāmah Qādī Thanāʾullāh Sāhib Pānīpattī Naqshbandī *rahimahullāh* devoted a special chapter to the topic of ihsān in his *Mā Lā Budda Minhu*. Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to relate it to us quite often. I take the opportunity of quoting it in the conclusion of this book *Hayāt al-Qulūb*. It reads as follows:

May Allāh *taʿālā* make you righteous. Whatever was explained to this point was related to īmān, Islam and the Sharīʿat. The core and reality of all this must be learnt from the company of Allāh's true servants. It should never be assumed that the Tarīqat is different from the Sharīʿat. Such an assumption is pure ignorance and unbelief. Rather, when a person spends time in the company of Allāh's special servants, and his heart is purified from attachment to all except Allāh *taʿālā*, his carnal self is purified and becomes the tranquil self, and he acquires sincerity; then it is this Sharīʿat which becomes beneficial to him, his salāh conveys him to the highest position with Allāh *taʿālā*, and his two rakʿats of salāh are better than 100 000 rakʿats of salāh of other people.

The same becomes of his fasting, charity and other good deeds. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: Even if you spend equal to Mt. Uhud in Allāh's cause, it will not equal the reward of one kilogram or half kilogram of what the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* spent. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said this on the basis of the strength of the īmān and sincerity of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

You must search for the internal light of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the chests of the dervishes and then illuminate your own heart with it so that you may have an insight into every good and every evil. The Qur'ān refers to a walī as a muttaqī. And a Hadīth shows us how to identify the auliyā' of Allāh *taʿālā*, viz. a person remembers Allāh *taʿālā* when he remains in their company. In other words, by remaining in the company of a walī, a person's love for the world decreases and his love for Allāh *taʿālā* increases. Allāh *taʿālā* knows best. As for the person who is not a muttaqī, he cannot be a walī.

Mathnawī

O brothers! There are many Shayāṭīn in the form of humans. Thus, do not place your hand in the hand of everyone (i.e. do not pledge bayʿat to anyone without making proper investigations).

Hadrat ʿAzīzān ʿAlī Rāmītnī *raḥimahullāh* said:

> The person in whose company you do not experience the focus like what is experienced in the company of the Ahlullāh and worldly love is not removed from you, then beware! Flee from the company of such a person (while having noble thoughts about him). If not, it will not be possible for you to derive the blessings of the company of the righteous.

Hadrat Khwājah Diyā'ullāh Naqshbandī Mujaddidī Kashmīrī *raḥimahullāh* was a senior shaykh of the Naqshbandī Mujaddidī spiritual lineage. He included a supplication towards the end of his great work, *Maqāṣid as-Sālikīn*. I take the opportunity of quoting

it here as a source of blessings. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept it in our favour as well.

Munājāt

اَللّٰهُمَّ احْرِقْ عَوَارِضَ قَلْبِيْ بِنَارِ عِشْقِكَ، وَتَزْدَدْ شَوْقَ اِلٰى جَمَالِكَ وَمَحَبَّتِكَ، وَنَوِّرْ قَلْبِيْ بِنُوْرِ مَعْرِفَتِكَ، وَاقْطَعْ حِجَابًا مِنْ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنِكَ، يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ.

O Allāh! Burn the obstacles of my heart with the fire of Your love. Increase my yearning for Your pure beauty and love. Illuminate my heart with the light of Your recognition. O You who are the greatest and most generous! Tear off the veil which exists between myself and You.

I have no expectation from my brothers of Ahl Suffā apart from the fact that they will supplicate in my favour. And that Allāh *taʿālā* will pardon the one who reads this book. Āmīn.

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, the book *Hayāt al-Qulūb Fī Ridā' al-Mahbūb*, has reached completion at the house of my daughter, Siddīqah Khātūn (Dār al-Amn, Khurram Nagar, Lucknow). May Allāh *taʿālā* accept it. This, at a time when my son, Maulwī Maqbūl Ahmad and his wife, Taqrīb an-Nisā' are extremely ill. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless them with good health. May He make this book of use to the ummat. Āmīn.

> I am neither grieved by outward forms and shapes, nor overjoyed by making letters. I am spending my life solely in Your remembrance. Words and meanings are of no use.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
5 Rajab 1437 A.H.
13 April 2016.

The laudable qualities of the auliyā'

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā*, when I returned today – 28 Rajab 1438 A.H. – from my journey to Bengal and Gujarat, I found that *Hayāt al-Qulūb* had been completed. In the course of this journey, I addressed a huge gathering in a large masjid of the city of Surat (Gujarat). This was my last lecture of the journey. I spoke on the verse:

أَلَآ إِنَّ أَوْلِيَآءَ اللهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ. اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَكَانُوْا يَتَّقُوْنَ.

This verse contains descriptions of the excellent qualities of the auliyā' and a glad tiding from Allāh *taʿālā*.[1]

My heart desires to translate this verse, give a short explanation of it, and to conclude the book. In fact, I am thinking of devoting a book to this subject. Inspiration is from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Translation of the verse:

Remember! Those who are the friends of Allāh – neither is there fear on them nor will they grieve. Those who believed and continued fearing.[1]

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[1] Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said that in this verse Allāh *taʿālā* Himself describes the qualities of the auliyā'; He did not leave it to us to decide what their qualities should be. Glory to Allāh! What an excellent reality he highlighted! (Qamar az-Zamān)

The auliyā' of Allāh (i.e. the friends of Allāh *taʿālā*) are those who possess īmān and piety. The higher the level of īmān and piety, the higher will be the friendship with Allāh *taʿālā*. In this respect, every believer is a walī. In the terminology of the Qur'ān and Sunnat, a walī is one who has a distinguished level of īmān and piety. Allāh's greatness and power are always before him; and his heart is filled with Allāh's love and His fear.

The words "Those who believed and continued fearing" are in praise of the auliyā'. A walī of Allāh *taʿālā* is one who is illuminated with the light of īmān and piety. In other words, he is perfect as regards creedal and practical powers. To rephrase this, a walī is one who is perfect in his īmān and – as far as possible – is not found deficient in fulfilling his servitude to Allāh *taʿālā*.[2]

Note: May Allāh *taʿālā* endow us with the qualities of wilāyat, its blessings and its glad tidings. May He honour us with a heart which is genuinely alive. Āmīn. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*. (compiler)

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[1] Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 62-63.
[2] Maulānā Muhammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Maʿārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 3, p. 606.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

All praise is due to Allāh *taʿālā* translation of this book was completed on 06 Rabīʿ ath-Thānī 1439 A.H./25 December 2017. We pray to Allāh *taʿālā* to accept this humble effort and to make it a source of our salvation in this world and the Hereafter. Āmīn.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ، وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

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